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BY

JOHN HOLLINGSHEAD

London

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LIMITED

11, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

1883

CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.

TO

One of my Oldest and Best Friends,

KNOWN TO HALF LONDON BY THE AFFECTIONATE NAME OF

"JOHNNY,"

AND TO THE OTHER HALF AS

J. L. TOOLE.

J. H.

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PREFACE.

IT is not usual to issue a book without a preface, though very often a preface is issued without a book. This is a preface, but "Footlights" may not be exactly a book. It is the eleventh volume of stories, essays, and sketches which I have published at various times. A polite reviewer might call me a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles; a ruder reviewer might call me a literary dustman. I have only one answer: I have found a publisher.

JOHN HOLLINGSHEAD.

May, 1883.

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THE DEAD FAIR.

ONE cold grey morning in the month of May, when the early blossoms had been nipped by untimely frost, an old man entered the silent streets of Gabletown. He was followed by a little, shaggy, knowing-looking dog, and by a larger dog, who drew a small rude cart, on which were a pipe and tabor and some gaudily-dressed puppets. The old man looked round him, like a stranger bewildered in an unknown town. He was evidently seeking for some once familiar place, and for signs of something which he expected to find. The houses blinked at him as he passed, and the mournful quiet made the dogs utter a low moan. At last a glimmer of awakening life was found, as usual, in an alehouse—one of the last places to close at night, and the first to open in the

morning. The old man drew up his family, seated himself on the bench in the doorway, and called for a mug of beer. The shock-headed grimy tapster looked at him with suspicion, but brought him the liquor.

"May I have a bowl of water for the dogs?" asked the old man, as he released the big dog from the cart.

"It's not our business to sell water," said the tapster, sulkily; "there's a pond round the corner." The dogs heard this remark, and ran in search of the pond.

"Where's the village green?" asked the old man.

"Built over, of course," was the answer. "A chapel stands on the Maypole ground, and I am one of the elders."

"Is there no May-day Fair, then?" inquired the old man, anxiously. By this time the dogs had returned, and took an interest in the conversation.

"Fair? No; nor nothing like it. We abolished all fairs more than twenty years ago, and don't encourage vagabonds."

"Are there no children in the place?" asked the old man, faintly. The dogs wagged their tails.

"Yes; at least, no; they are all young ladies and gentlemen."

As the morning opened, and the houses began to move, the old man wandered with his family into the broadest street he could find, and began to play his pipe and tabor. The big dog stood on his head, and the small dog waltzed round him. Every window was soon full of smiling faces. The sun obligingly came out for a few minutes. The little children toddled into the street, and crowded round the players. Babies in arms offered their morning cake to the clever dogs, and the old man, and even the wooden puppets representing the Devil and Dr. Faustus, were treated with hospitality. Old people followed who had never been known to smile for years, and laughed till they cracked the dry skin on their wrinkled faces. One little dreamy-eyed girl-child stepped out of the crowd and kissed the big dog, upon which that clever actor gave himself airs of superiority over the little dog. The whole village was at the foot of the old man; but his triumph was soon over. The tapster had roused other tapsters—and there was a tapster in Gabletown to every six persons in the population, including children and idiots. The tapsters thought their business was being injured, and they called upon the authorities to protect them. Bumbledom came out in all its might and glory, and in the name of sour beer and more sour Puritanism, arrested the vagabond family, and fastened the old

man in the stocks. The children were sent weeping to their homes or schools; but they found their way to the prisoners during the day, and deposited fruit and cakes and flowers within their reach.

The Devil and Dr. Faustus looked very miserable and useless in their box, and the big dog utterly collapsed under this unfamiliar trouble; but the little dog was more cheerful and active. He trotted backwards and forwards, and when the stocks-keeper came to see that the prisoner, condemned to twenty-four hours' durance, was all right for the night, he followed that officer quietly to his home, and waited on the doorstep. When the bright round moon arose, he went into the road and looked up at the casements. He saw the dreamy-eyed girl-child. They understood each other. The child crept out of the house with the keys, and unlocked the stocks, setting the old man free. He gathered his puppets together, and kissed the child's hand. The child kissed the dogs—and this time the little dog. The old man and his family went down a dark winding street out of the sad and sleeping town, and at the bottom they turned and looked back, and saw the child still standing on the hill-top waving them a last farewell.

THE BAFFLED BURGLAR AND THE BOGUS BULLION;

OR,

THE BENEVOLENT BANKER OF BASINGHALL.

MANY cleverer men have no doubt been connected with the criminal classes than old Jemmy Alias, whose death was simply recorded a few days ago in the *Millbank Gazette*, but few conducted their business more privately or with more gentlemanly feeling, or brought up their families more respectably. His children were sent to the Sunday and parochial schools long before Board schools were invented. They were studiously kept in ignorance of their father's profession, and as his business lay chiefly in the City, they thought he got his living as "something in the City." Jemmy had been brought up to burglary and illegal pawning, like his father and

grandfather before him. He knew what burglary was, and he was determined that his children should not follow in his footsteps. It is recorded that a distinguished member of the dramatic profession had the same feeling with regard to the stage, and dealt with his children accordingly.

Jemmy Alias was not what might be called a rough and ready burglar. There was a good deal of the artist in his composition. He abhorred violence, never carried fire-arms or life-preservers, and always yielded to superior force. He would have made a good diplomatist. Some burglars called him lazy, because he was satisfied with about one operation a year; but he thought his work out, selected jobs that were worth doing, and did not fool his energies away in a state of fussy activity. He was essentially a banker's burglar. In the old days, when banking was little more than shop-keeping, and banks were not half the imposing buildings they are at present, Jemmy's business was a thriving one. He was a perfect master of his profession—thanks to his father and his grandfather's teaching. He seldom made a mistake, and while his companions fell into traps and had to pass a great portion of their time at Botany Bay, in the most delightful climate in the world, Jemmy lived happily in the fogs of London, paying rent, rates, and taxes, including Church rates. He

was a staunch Conservative, and a great supporter of time-honoured institutions. His favourite papers were the *John Bull* and the *Morning Herald*, and he looked upon Oliver Cromwell and George Washington as the greatest scoundrels that ever existed.

Though Jemmy, as I have said before, seldom made a mistake, it must not be supposed that he was always successful. On one important occasion, though from no fault of his own, he was very far from successful. His plans had been as well laid, his patience was as untiring, and his mechanical ingenuity as complete as ever. He had believed that what he saw on the surface was real, that broadcloth, ostentatious charity, and ill-concealed piety meant capital and trustworthiness. He was bitterly deceived, and his faith in the perfectibility of human nature was shaken for ever. He had surveyed a celebrated banking house or shop in the neighbourhood of Basinghall; for in those days all the City banks were not concentrated in Lombard Street. The man he worked with, a wretched, half-starved, educated creature in rusty black, had taken an office next door to this bank, and had described himself on the doorpost as an "accountant." A few second-hand ledgers and a little stationery served to stock the place and give it an air of business, while a huge

strong box, labelled with the names of a firm who had failed for a fabulous amount, was, to some minds, a guarantee of stability.

In those days the Bank of England was not altogether the Bank of England. It had not very long recovered from a severe shock to its credit. Its bank-notes, labelled one pound sterling, had not long before been circulating at six shillings discount. In other words, it had been paying only fourteen shillings in the pound, which gave rise to a comic song, sung, of course, by those who were not creditors:

I'd rather have a guinea than a one-pound note.

People were not so ready to rush into its arms, as they are at present, with all their available specie, and it was not the custom, for some time after this fourteen shillings in the pound affair, for bankers and merchants to clear their chests at night, to take the contents to the great bullion-shop for the sake of security.

Finance, like other things, has its whims and fashions, and for some years after the Bank of England had lost caste, it was the fashion to select, create, and maintain millionaires. It is difficult to say upon what principle many of these millionaires were selected. Dirt and shabbiness had something to do with it. A banking-shop whose windows had not been cleaned for fifty years took the fancy of the

public in one direction; an old man with gaiters, a ragged coat, and a shocking bad hat took the public fancy equally in another direction. When the shabby man and the shabby shop met on the terms of owner and office, the millionaire was established beyond the reach of public fickleness.

The banking-shop which had attracted the delicate attentions of Jemmy Alias was kept by one of these millionaires, whose name was Stocks. Stocks had sprung into popularity by a lucky piece of impudence. He went to the Bank of England to change a note for a large amount, and was civilly asked by the clerk to comply with the usual form, and put his name on the back. Stocks saw his chance and refused.

"Why," said he, "should I back your rubbishing paper? You've stopped payment once, and may stop again. Give me the money, or I'll make you bankrupt in an hour."

This story soon got wind in the City, and it consolidated Stocks's character as a millionaire. People crowded round his shop, as they crowd round Coutts's or Drummond's, and begged him to take care of their money. A banker, in theory, is a man who lends the public money; in practice, he is a man who borrows money from the public, or has it thrust upon him. He fattens upon that false pride which impels nearly

every man to keep a telling balance at his banker's—a practice about as sensible as giving a cabman twice his fare, or a waiter three times his fees. Stocks was held to be the richest man in the City.

It is hardly fair to the noble but scarcely appreciated society of burglars, and perhaps scarcely advisable for other reasons, to explain in detail how Jemmy Alias obtained access to the vital part of Stocks's banking-shop in the dead of night, accompanied by the accountant, who was shabby enough for a millionaire, and of no use, except to hold a candle. Any juvenile cracksman, wishing to learn the whole art of burglary, must not come to me to teach him. The police reports in the daily papers are quite sufficient for his purpose.

Jemmy's experienced eye soon detected the places where the bullion, notes, and documents ought to have been stored, but his experienced hand failed to make the usual impression on the strong boxes. He tried all his well-constructed implements in vain, and it at last struck him that the chests were solid iron! One chest he at last succeeded in opening to find nothing inside but a workman's clay-pipe and a small paper of unused tobacco. On the paper was the favourite quotation from the favourite song of the day:

I'd rather have a guinea than a one-pound note.

Jemmy looked upon this as adding insult to injury. He had opened a porter's cupboard. He sat down on one of the iron blocks and tried to grasp the situation. The effort made him speechless for several minutes.

"Mate," said the shabby one, "what is it?"

"What is it?" echoed Jemmy. "Why, we don't know nothing whatsomedever about our business. Call ourselves blooming burglars! Why, the gent as keeps this 'ere place can give us any amount of chalks and lick us. We're not fit to hold a candle to him." Saying this, Jemmy seized the candle held by the shabby one, and led the way back to their office. A very little work filled up the opening they had made between the two premises, and they finished the short remainder of the night on a couple of office stools, with their heads upon a desk. In the morning Jemmy put his face in a tub of water, and gave himself a brush, and waited outside the banking-shop till the banker arrived. This was early, for Stocks was a scrupulous observer of the outward decencies. Jemmy was respectful to Stocks, and Stocks soon saw that Jemmy's reason for seeking an interview was important.

"Guv'nor," said Jemmy, who took no pains to conceal his admiration for Stocks, "we must have you amongst us; we can't do without you. Come

and be the President of our BLOOMING BURGLARS' BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION."

"Whatever I do," said Stocks, "must be connected with the educational and moral improvement of my fellow-creatures. My long attachment to EXETER HALL really leaves me little or no choice in the matter. Call your society the BLOOMING BURGLARS' BENEVOLENT REFORM ASSOCIATION, and I am with you."

"Done to you, sir," said Jemmy, with decision. "The name shall be altered before to-morrow."

Jemmy Alias and Millionaire Stocks remained on terms of intimacy for several years. Jemmy never said a word to shake the credit of Stocks's Bank, and Stocks never said a word to damage the character of Jemmy. When Stocks died, in the fulness of time, there was nothing to indicate his emptiness of pocket. His charitable bequests were very large, and his executors paid probate duty on an enormous amount. The bank is still thriving.

THE GIANT AND FAIRY.

PART I.

SOME people are never satisfied. If you give them beer, they want wine; if you give them wine, they want water; if you give them turtle-soup, they want boiled beef and carrots; if you give them boiled beef and carrots, they want duck and green peas.

They had a child. I say "they," because they were persons of no importance—of no importance to this story. The child was a boy. He was not beautiful; he was not what they call a "fine" child. He was a small child, as children go; and a truthful person might have called him a mean-looking child. Still, if there were many children larger and more beautiful, there were many children smaller and more ugly.

They (the persons of no importance) were not satisfied with their offspring. They called him an

"undersized runt." They did not christen him under this title, because in these matters the clergyman has to be consulted; but this is what they called him in familiar conversation. I believe his name was William, but I have no means of proving the fact. His surname has been lost in the mists, or, rather, misters of antiquity.

He was not a favourite child. His education was neglected. There were no Board schools, no "coffee palaces," no "kiosks," in those days. He was not particularly well fed, although he was young at a time when legs of mutton were sixpence a pound. He was sent into the streets to grow. He grew dirty. Baths and washhouses were not invented then. He washed himself in a horse-trough outside a public-house, and passed half his days following street-shows, acrobats, jugglers, fantoccini, fire-eaters, etc., from street to street. At night he had the galanty show and other delights. Music-halls had not been discovered; and between one fair and another, a deal of "talent," now utilised for "turns" in Corinthian Saloons, found a free stage for exercise on the King's Highway.

Still he grew slowly. He attained the age at which children of his class were expected to earn an independent living—the age of eight years—and was still an undersized runt. He became successively an errand-boy, a printer's-devil, and a score of other

things, until time brought him in contact with a couple of old ladies who kept a penny theatre, or "gaff," in the New Cut, Lambeth. They were most respectable old ladies, who knitted stockings, and might have sat as models for the aunts of any well-to-do member of society. They took a fancy to the lad, and made him a check-taker at their theatrical establishment. They sat at a table knitting and taking money, while he was enclosed in a kind of watch-box nearly opposite them, placed at the mouth of a narrow passage which led to the theatre. The watch-box was small, the passage was narrow, and there was generally an economy of space in this part, as in all parts, of the building.

The quiet life, the regular habits, the wholesome meals, and the simplicity of his work generally told upon the undersized runt, and he grew rapidly. He grew too rapidly, though not visibly, for he was concealed in his box. Nature is so fickle in the bestowal of her favours. When he wanted to grow, he remained small; now he wanted to remain small, he grew in every direction. Like the prisoner in the dungeon with the contracting walls, he saw the sides and roof of his workshop advancing towards him. His box became tight; it became tighter; it became unbearable. One night he heard it cracking like a band-box when sat upon. There was no

course left but to throw himself upon the kindness of his employers. He did not literally throw himself upon their kindness, because such an act would have smothered a Howard or a Mrs. Fry, but he explained his position. Oddly enough, they had not noticed it very keenly, and they did what they could to meet the difficulty. They took out a few feet of brickwork in one direction, and they lowered the floor in another.

This eased him for a time, but his difficulties were beginning to grow outside the "gaff." He had to leave his bedstead in his humble lodgings and sleep upon the floor. His landlady removed him to a ground room, for fear of the "jists," as she called them, giving way, to say nothing of the staircase. His tailor looked coldly on him, and refused point-blank to supply him with the "celebrated ten-shilling trousers, made to measure, of any pattern." His bootmaker, for a long time, treated him in the same way, until a curious incident occurred which altered his position at the boot-shop. An important police official saw a pair of William's boots standing in the window, and, thinking that five hundred pairs of that size would fit five hundred policemen selected haphazard, immediately ordered five hundred pairs, which the country paid for. The police for several years could not catch the stoutest vagabond who

chose to run, but William had earned the eternal gratitude of the bootmaker.

His bulk still increased, surely and steadily, with this difference, that it was now observed daily by the two old ladies. They removed him from the box, and placed him at the money-table, while they each in turn took his position as a check-taker. This brought him more into the view of the public, and at last he excited attention, to the injury of the entertainment in the theatre. The old ladies, with all their kindness, were beginning to think seriously of the difficulty they were in, when one night a foreign-looking gentleman in a fur coat (the weather was mild and the month was October) drove up to the "gaff" and asked for William. He need not have asked, because William was only too visible; but the foreign-looking gentleman evidently wished to act in a formal manner. Being introduced to William, he presented a document which turned out to be certain indentures of apprenticeship under which William was bound by his parents for seven years to Herr Smith, general agent and *entrepreneur*, to be brought up as a professional giant.

PART II.

WILLIAM went away peaceably, after taking an affectionate farewell of his two old friends, and waited to see what he had to learn, and what Herr Smith had to teach. William had much to learn, but Herr Smith had very little to teach. William learned, for the first time, that he was only eight years old, when he thought he was fifteen, and that clothes were padded like feather-beds, and that boots stood on cork soles four or five inches high. He was taken to Herr Smith's house, a place like a small madhouse, in a lonely part of the suburbs, looking out upon market gardens, and a considerable distance from any other human habitation. Here he met Herr Smith's family—his "Happy Family," as he used to call them. When William first saw them they were sitting round a table at tea or supper. At the head of the table was a little sweet-faced girl with golden hair, who was cutting bread-and-butter from a large loaf. Opposite her, at the other end of the table, sat a watery-headed dwarf, whose face suggested idiotcy; while on one side sat a "horse-faced man," and at the other side sat a hairy monster known as the "Human Baboon." The long melancholy face of the horse-headed one was resting on the table staring

at vacancy, but the hairy monster was making violent and uncouth gestures and uttering gurgling sounds, because the little fairy at the head of the table was not cutting his bread-and-butter quick enough. The idiot-dwarf was just beginning to add to the noise, when his eye caught the form of Herr Smith, who entered with William. Herr Smith conducted William to the head of the table, and placed him by the side of the fairy. "Make yourself at 'ome," he said, in the purest English, and left the room.

"Are you the new giant?" asked the fairy.

William scarcely knew what to reply. He hardly knew what he was.

"Oh, yes, you are," continued the fairy, still cutting bread-and-butter for the impatient monsters, and seeing William's hesitation.

"I knew, when poor old Gorgibuster died, that the Guv'nor would get another."

"Who was Gorgibuster?" timidly inquired William.

"Our last giant," replied the fairy; "at least, the last that I remember, although our Guv'nor has had several."

"Oh!" said William.

"Yes," continued the fairy, "poor old Gorgibuster was very good-natured, but rather deaf, and I don't think he was real."

"Indeed?" said William feebly.

"Yes," said the fairy. "I sometimes fancied his legs were half wood. Are your legs half wood? Are you deaf? Are you good-natured?"

William made a sign that the monsters were listening.

"Oh, never mind them," returned the fairy; "they don't know what we're saying."

"What are you?" asked William.

"I am the 'INFANT NIGHTINGALE' in some places," said the fairy; "and the 'MESMERIC WONDER' in others."

"What is a nightingale?" asked the new giant.

"One who sings," she said; and she ran up a scale like a musical-box.

"And what is a Mesmeric Wonder?" he asked.

"Oh, nonsense!" she said, laughing; "you know what conjuring is."

Here a pause occurred in the conversation, which was broken by the fairy, who said:

"I think I shall like you."

"I hope so," said William.

"Shall you like me?" inquired the fairy.

"I'm sure I shall," replied the new giant.

"The worst of it is, we shall not be long together," continued the fairy sadly.

"Why not?" asked William.

"Because I know our Guv'nor has got an order for a giant from abroad, and I feel that he means to send you."

PART III.

THE little fairy was right. William was shipped off to Germany the next day. He was well fed and well clothed, but he was treated like a prisoner. The object seemed to be, and was, to keep him out of sight as much as possible. He had a melancholy cabin all to himself on board the ship, and when he arrived at Hamburg he was hurried into a private carriage and driven with drawn blinds to his destination. This was a *Museum*, so-called, kept by another Herr Smith or Schmidt, who spoke German, French, and Italian, but no English. Poor William's powers and opportunities of learning languages were very limited, and he lived a sad and contemplative life. He was allowed limited exercise, but only in the dead of night, and was kept closely confined during the day, excepting during the hours of exhibition. In this way he passed several years, going from country to country, and seeing little or nothing. He went from Germany to Russia, from Russia to Italy, from Italy to Spain, and from Spain to France. At last he

got to Paris. Here he was made the great attraction of a *café* outside the barriers. Going into this *café* one night, I saw him for the first time. He knew I was an Englishman, and his delight was almost childish.

"Come in here," he said, "for God's sake, and let us have a talk; I have not met one of my countrymen for three years." He took me out of the crowd into an inner room, which he told me was his apartment, his den, or prison.

"I am sick of this confinement," he said. "What can I do? I have saved money—perhaps a thousand or more. I want to return to England and settle in some business."

An idea struck me.

"Have you any taste for public life?" I asked.

He looked at me curiously.

"Any taste for keeping a public-house?" I explained.

His face brightened.

"I can go out, then, when I like, can't I?" he asked.

"Of course you can," I said.

"And exhibit myself or not, as I think proper?"

"Yes."

"Done!" he replied, and the matter was settled.

In a few weeks he was in London; in a few more weeks he had found the fairy singing at a fair; in a month or two he married her, and settled down in a popular tavern, to which he gave the name of the "*Giant and Fairy.*"

GOODS AND CHATTELS.

TWO TRUE STORIES.

I.—THE WANDERING CABINET.

FORTY years ago the old city of Frankfort-on-the Maine was not quite so prim as it is at present. The substantial villas of the merchants and bankers, so suggestive of Clapham and Clapton, were not so numerous, and the old part of the city near the river was not so degraded and deserted. The *Jüden-Gasse* was not quite so like a "back-slum" in Ratcliffe Highway, and the house in which the founder of the Rothschild family is said to have been born had not fallen a heap of ruins across the narrow footway.

In those days fairs were held, as they are held now—fairs in which people bought food, clothing, furniture, and jewels—fairs which would be more justly described by our term "market." A constant

attendant at this Frankfort fair was an itinerant Jew, who dealt in old silver, furniture, and *bric-à-brac.* As his goods were valuable he occupied a booth, and amongst his treasures was a faded cabinet standing on four high legs, its body consisting of four large *plaques* of *Louis XVI. Sèvres.* One of the *plaques* was cracked, and, considering the antiquity of the cabinet, and the way it had been dragged about the country, the wonder is that it held together in anything like form to tempt a purchaser. The dealer was evidently tired of it. How he came by it was probably a mystery which no one cared to fathom; how he was to get rid of it appeared to be another mystery. He had brought it to Frankfort twice, and taken it away again; but the third time it caught the eye of an English lady, whose amusement it was to collect odds and ends in out-of-the-way places, and whose knowledge and keenness had been sharpened by long practice. The usual higgling went on, but not for long, as the dealer meant to sell the cabinet, and in less than half-an-hour it became the lady's property for the sum of fourteen pounds. When it was brought into civilised society, brushed and cleaned up, and introduced to many disjointed members of the same family, it was at last identified as having belonged to *Marie Antoinette,* and to have formed

part of the furniture of her boudoir. What its history had been since the stormy times of the Revolution must be left to the imagination, but some of its fellow-pieces came into the possession of the late Lord Hertford, and may still be amongst the noble collections of Sir Richard Wallace. After gladdening the eyes of several masters and mistresses, this wandering cabinet was put up to auction at Christie's about four years ago, with a reserve of three thousand pounds, but was bought in, the biddings only reaching two thousand six hundred pounds. It was bought immediately afterwards by a Bond Street dealer in *bric-à-brac* for the sum fixed, three thousand pounds, and it is believed that it has gone back to Frankfort, and has found a probable final resting-place in the house of one of the Rothschilds.

II.—THE DESPISED TREASURE.

A LITTLE later than the date of the last true story—in fact, about ten years ago—a party were assembled at the country-house of a popular English nobleman in the middle of the hunting season. One day during a spell of unfavourable weather, when it was necessary to keep indoors, read books, play at billiards,

smoke, and fidget, one of the party, whose scent for old china was keener even than his scent for foxes, made a minute inspection of the premises, with the full consent of the host, and found himself, in due course, in the basement and housekeeper's room. He had turned over the contents of several cupboards and packing-cases, examined one or two old book-cases, ascended steps to look on high shelves, and descended steps to peer into dark cellars. The servants had begun to vote him a bore, and to wonder why he was privileged to rake out forgotten corners, and so-called "Slut's-holes," when he suddenly pounced upon a heap of dusty china, half covered with straw, that was lying uncared for at the bottom of a pickle and preserve closet. He uncovered his treasures one by one, dusted them carefully with his own silk handkerchief, laid them out in a row on a kitchen table, and then questioned his host as to how long they had been in his possession or in their late half-hidden position. The host could throw very little light upon the subject, thought they had been in the family for many years, and believed they were removed from a small old drawing-room some years before, when the family mansion was altered and enlarged. He was not apparently disposed to treat the matter as of much importance, until the discoverer aroused his curiosity with one or two extra-

ordinary questions, put in a "piling-up" series familiar to gentlemen of the bar.

"Would you be surprised to hear that two thousand pounds are standing on that table?" Signs of incredulity from all present. "Four thousand pounds?" More signs of greater incredulity. "Six thousand pounds?" And so on to seven, eight, and nine. Bets were freely made, as it was a sporting house, and a telegram was sent to one of the leading *bric-à-brac* dealers in London, asking him to come down, if possible, by the next train, and see something that he would be eager to purchase. The long-buried treasures were then carefully removed upstairs by the discoverer, who would allow no rough and careless hand to touch them, and they turned out to be a complete *garniture de cheminée*, consisting of a centre-piece representing a ship (the arms of Paris), and two vases about six inches high, all three perfect old *Sèvres Rose du Barry*, with festoons of green ribbon.

The same night the dealer arrived—the dealer mentioned before—from Bond Street, and his first question was, after examining the *garniture*, "Have these been shown or offered to any other dealer?" On being assured that he was the first man honoured with a view, he offered ten thousand pounds for the set, without the slightest hesitation. The host

was now aroused, and before closing with the Bond Street dealer he thought it best to take another opinion, and in this he was supported by the discoverer. An equally celebrated dealer from Pall Mall was summoned, who knew that the Bond Street dealer had been before him. He offered eleven thousand pounds. The owner now thought that the most satisfactory way of testing the real value of the treasures was to send them to a sale, and sent they were accordingly to the everlasting *Christie's*. Here they formed the subject of much excitement and "spirited bidding," and they eventually became the property of Lord Dudley for ten thousand five hundred pounds, and are now on a chimney-piece at his house in Park Lane, the delight of many admirers who are ignorant of their past history.

A

LEGEND OF BRIGHTHELMSTONE.

SEVENTY or eighty years ago—certainly within the recollection of our fathers—the leading notion of a Londoner's holiday was a visit to a place called a "Spa." There were Spas of various kinds, as there are watering-places of various kinds. Some were more fashionable and exclusive than others, and some were more distant from London than others, but they all had certain features in common. Of course, there was an Assembly Room—a place where people could meet, talk, flirt, and dance, and get as good an imitation of the bad air of a London ball-room as it was possible to get in the country or the suburbs. Of course, there was a master of the ceremonies, sometimes called a "beau," who ruled the mixed multitude of invalids and idlers according to his ability and influence. But the chief characteristic of a popular Spa was a spring or well of more

or less nauseous water, which was supposed to be remarkable for certain health-giving qualities. The more filthy this water was to the taste, the more people believed in its efficacy, and the more they flocked to the lucky "Spa" that was so fortunate as to possess this treasure. This water may have been at Bath or Cheltenham, at Tunbridge Wells or Leamington; but it sometimes favoured places as near London as Hampstead, or as unromantic as Islington or Clerkenwell. When Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had the megrims, she took a coach to Islington, to "take the waters;" and the proprietors of Sadler's Wells, when they wished to draw fashion to the neighbourhood of St. John Street Road, prevailed upon the celebrated Beau Nash—the so-called King of Bath—to accept a starring engagement as their master of the ceremonies. Everywhere one heard of the weak and idle washing the inside of their systems with "natural physic," sweetened with a little music and dancing; but nowhere of that fashionable pickling of the outside of the human system, which has now taken the place in England of the other mania. Margate in those days was known and patronised by holiday makers, but not because it was immediately opposite the North Pole, and had a beach washed by star-fish, floating corks, sea-weeds, and salt-water. Margate was a "Spa," and behaved as became a place of

medicinal importance. It turned its back upon the North Pole, the fresh air, and the scummy sea. Its best houses were built in a solid square, with their faces gazing admiringly towards the Assembly Rooms. That no person might be kept away from this favoured fountain of health by any horror of the briny element, the papers of the time—they were not very numerous—announced that every house was thoroughly protected from the sea air, and that the virtues of the Margate spring had been thoroughly tested by every doctor of eminence. Our fathers and grandfathers flocked to Margate, washed themselves inside, but never outside, and felt supremely happy.

Sea-bathing was hidden in the womb of time, and would probably have long remained hidden, but for the cleverness of a doctor at a rival fishing-town on the South Coast, now known as Brighton, but then called Brighthelmstone. This doctor was not altogether uninterested in many acres of chalky land on the sea-shore, which was not quite a treasure to the agriculturist. He argued that Brighthelmstone was the nearest watering-place to London, and if he could find a plan of drawing London to the South Coast, his land, which would not grow corn or carrots, might soon be covered with houses. He was not long in finding such a plan. He published a

pamphlet, in which he proved that the cure for all fleshly ills, and the sure way of reaching a ripe old age that would put Methuselah's in the shade was to pickle yourself daily in salt water, and particularly in the salt water of Brighthelmstone. Those were days in which people had time to read, and the pamphlet was read, and believed in. Brighthelmstone was handy—the drive to it was pleasant—the place was cheerful; and London was conquered. Pickling became the order of the day. Not to have pickled yourself was held to be the sign of a low-bred person—a Radical, a non-believer in Church and State, and probably an atheist. The doctor was rewarded for his ingenuity. His land was taken by builders; he became rich, and had the honour of sitting thrice as mayor for the town he had so greatly benefited.

MUSCLE-WORSHIP.

THE little village of Stoke-Regis, which lies hidden in a gap of the Downshire hills, was always celebrated for its strong men. There was a tradition, as firmly rooted in the place as the old Norman church, or the fragments of a Druid's circle, which stood like a ring of old jagged teeth on the top of the highest hill, that Stoke-Regis had bred many famous giants. The names of many heroes of this kind recorded in old story-books were claimed as Stoke-Regis or Downshire names, and many famous wrestlers of modern times were known to have been Downshire men. All this tended to keep up the worship of physical strength in Stoke-Regis, and such worship was easily turned into bad channels. A Downshire man, named Tom Dibbles, whose father belonged to Stoke-Regis, and whose mother came from an adjoining village, called Stoke-

Brewin, was engaged as a farm-labourer by a Squire of the "old school"—a patron of wrestling, boxing, single-stick, fighting, and other brutal sports. This Squire, whose name was Southern, looked upon a man much as he looked upon a horse—as an animal which was worth nothing more than its bone, muscle, flesh, and strength. If any colt in his stable looked promising, he had it trained for the racecourse, and if any man on his estate looked promising, he had him trained as a prize-fighter. He kept bull-dogs, game-cocks, and other animals to vary his sports; but he thought more of a good muscular pugilist than of all these animals.

"Thee bean't Stoke-Regis, be 'ee?" said the Squire one day, as Tom was working hard in a potato-field.

"Noa," said Tom, touching his hair, and looking up from his work; "fayther wur Stoke-Regis, moother wur Stoke-Brewin."

"Would 'ee loike to foight a Stoke-Regis mon, if I foind 'ee wun?" asked the Squire.

"Foight any mon in thick there mead," replied Tom, pointing to a closely-cropped meadow, "if you'll gi' I wages for day's work."

The bargain was struck, and the Squire looked about for a strong Stoke-Regis man. He soon

found one in the person of Harry Wold, a man about Tom Dibble's age, height, and strength, who was also in his employment. Both men were put into fair training by the Squire, who paid all the expenses, and kept them for a month while they were improving their physical condition. There was much excitement in the two villages, and indeed throughout Downshire, and many bets were made upon the contest. Umpires were chosen from both villages, and it was arranged that the trial should begin with a wrestling-match. The place chosen for the contest was a meadow on Squire Southern's estate, and a small purse of gold was to be the prize awarded to the winner.

We may pass over all details of the struggle—all description of the village crowd who came to witness it. The struggle was very brief and brutal; the drunkenness and disorder which prevailed were equally brutal, and not so brief. Tom Dibbles threw the Stoke-Regis man—Harry Wold—heavily on his back—so heavily that he could never have risen without assistance. His spine was injured, so the doctor in attendance said; and the crowd were disappointed of half their sport—the fight that was to follow the wrestling-match. The Squire—a man as coarse as his peasants—took no pains to conceal his vexation.

Tom Dibbles after this victory became the hero of Stoke-Brewin. Stoke-Brewin was an exact counterpart of Stoke-Regis, and Squire Southern's property reached almost to its borders. Harry Wold was a long time—a very long time, before he recovered the use of his legs—and when he began to hobble about with a stick, he looked like a premature old man. He was still kept in the Squire's employ and received his scanty wages, but the Squire evidently disliked him, and had not the delicacy to conceal his dislike. Stoke-Regis took its tone from the Squire, and Harry Wold, though he worked, or was supposed to work on the Squire's estate, was compelled to live in Stoke-Brewin.

Stoke-Brewin showed its admiration for Tom Dibbles by presenting him with a silver jug, on which was an inscription, drawn up by the village schoolmaster, recording the victory. The trifling fact that Stoke-Brewin had only furnished a mother for its hero was made the most of in this inscription. Tom was persuaded to transfer his physical advantages to London, where muscular young men were much in request as prize-fighters, and he went one day by a stage-coach which passed near the village, leaving an only son as his representative in Stoke-Brewin. He could not take his trophy—

his silver mug, with him, because it was mortgaged to the alehouse keeper for a long score of beer and tobacco. Tom's career in London was not prosperous. He was soon defeated by a negro fighting-man, and was ashamed to return to Downshire. He hung about the taprooms of Soho and St. Giles's for a few years, and at last died of gin and consumption in one of the hospitals.

Young Tom Dibbles, who was left in Stoke-Brewin, had more than his father's strength, but none of his father's disposition. Many Stoke-Brewin men spurred him on to challenge a Stoke-Regis man, and when he showed no inclination for the contest, or refused outright, he was looked upon as a bad son and a degenerate villager. Many, however, who felt inclined to call him a coward, had not the courage to do so; for though his fair, round, open face was beaming with good-nature, there was something about him, even more than his physical strength, which denoted determination and a power of endurance. The question of his courage was soon set at rest at a fire which occurred at a farmhouse on Squire Southern's estate. He went into a burning barn, where some poor tramping haymakers were huddled with their children, and dragged them out of the suffocating smoke and flames at the risk of his life. One of his cheeks

got frightfully scarred in this adventure—the mark being one which he would carry to his grave. The people he had saved were not Stoke-Brewin, nor even Downshire people, and he was not presented with a purse of gold, nor even with a testimonial mug for his heroism, but there were no whispers now about his cowardice.

Young Tom had no family ties, and having the strength of two men, he used it like a good genius of the village. Though manners had a little improved in and around Stoke-Brewin and Stoke-Regis, the most useless exhibitions of physical power were still in fashion. The man who could throw a skittle-ball the farthest, or could pull against a plough-horse, or could perform any other trick leading to no useful result, had the seat of honour in the village alehouse. In the meantime, many of the village roofs were unthatched, the pathways between the houses were broken, uneven, and badly drained; many cottages had sunk into hovels for want of a little labour and attention; a dam in a small river—the only barrier which would save Stoke-Brewin from a flood, if a wet season sent the waters down from the hills—was allowed to remain half-washed away; the little village school-house, not much used nor respected by the Stoke-Brewin people, was more like a half-

deserted ruin than a comfortable building; the churchyard was rank with weeds, and the whole place, much like Stoke-Regis, furnished similes for dirt and wretchedness in other parts of the country. The chief men of the village seemed to be blind to this disgrace that existed under their eyes, and they lived gloating over the reputation of famous fights and physical contests in which their Stoke-Brewin champions had been victorious.

Young Tom Dibbles, as he grew older, became less and less of their way of thinking, and more determined to use his strength for the real benefit of his village. While they abused the gifts that God had given them — that natural health and physical power, which wealth cannot always purchase — he used his like a sensible, charitable, Christian man, as he turned out to be.

Old Harry Wold, who had long been a broken-down labourer on Squire Southern's estate, could hardly work sufficiently to maintain his position; and when old Squire Southern died from a hunting-fall, he was threatened with the workhouse. He and young Tom Dibbles had long been friends, and the old man had been assisted in many ways by the young one. Tom had to work hard for his living, as the Downshire wages were not high, but still he found time to help the old man. The know-

ledge that the father had made Harry Wold's life a burden to him, and had probably shortened it by many years, perhaps operated on the young man's mind. Old Harry's one-roomed hovel was repaired in the night with stones gathered from the stream of a neighbouring valley, and the thatch was mended at the same time. The old man never saw Tom at work upon this task, as it was done when he was dead asleep, but the villagers knew what had been done, and who had done it, and it set them thinking.

"I be dun vor, Measter Tom," the old man said one night, dropping on a low stool, "there be nowt atween I and workhus."

"Thee bean't dun for yet, if I know ut," replied Tom, who spoke as if he could move a mountain.

The old man had told him how he was behindhand with his rent, and how troubles never come singly. His landlord—the small grocer of the village—hearing that young Squire Southern was about to cast him off, had threatened to turn him out of the hut, and seize his few poor bits of furniture on the following morning.

Tom Dibbles was not a rich labourer, in fact he had nothing but eighteenpence in his pocket, but he had property which he was determined to

turn into money. The silver-mug—the pride of the village, the record of his late father's struggle with the old man—was a useless chattel in his possession, and he resolved to sell it. The market-town of Downham was twelve miles off, but he started, at once, at full speed, and reached it before all the shopkeepers had gone to bed. He found a working-watchmaker and silversmith, who purchased it as old metal, and Tom hurried back with the welcome money, and arrived at Stoke-Brewin before old Harry Wold had risen from his straw-bed.

The rent was paid, and thus half the difficulty was got rid of; but the other half remained to be dealt with. Tom was equal to the task. Luckily he had a friend in Squire Southern's overseer, and he got himself yoked as a fellow-labourer with old Harry Wold. From that moment the old man appeared to have gathered new strength. His tasks, no matter how hard, were well done, and done quickly. He dug potatoes, trimmed hedges, dug ditches, and cut firewood as well as the youngest labourer on the estate, and his wages were always as much as young Tom Dibble's. The truth oozed out at last, and again set the village thinking. Tom was seen by a couple of loiterers at a stile wheeling a heavy load up a

steep hill, while the old man walked at his side quietly and thankfully.

Tom's example was not lost upon Stoke-Brewin, nor yet upon Stoke-Regis. Strong men, under his guidance, began mending the pathways, repairing the cottages, weeding the churchyard, and rebuilding the school-house and dam, and found in this work an amusement after their task-labour was finished. Tom was loved by the young, and respected by the old, and acknowledged by all to be the good genius of the village.

A COCKNEY STORY.

"The rest of the characters [in "The Mill on the Floss"] are simply the sweepings out of a Pentonville omnibus. . . ."

"In the English Cockney School, which consummates itself in George Eliot, the personages are picked up from behind the counter and out of the gutter; and the landscape, by excursion train to Gravesend, with return ticket to City Road."—JOHN RUSKIN *on "George Eliot" in "Nineteenth Century," October*, 1881.

THE Angel, at Islington—so called because it stands in the parish of Clerkenwell—is not the only thing in the neighbourhood which is named in a spirit of contradiction. The New River—once an open stream is turfed over, and flows under the roadway, but is still called the New River, though it was born more than three centuries ago; while the New Road was called the New Road after it had reached the respectable age of over half a century, and until it was re-christened, like most thoroughfares, by the Metropolitan Board of Works.

The Angel at Islington was once a great starting-

point for the coaches on the great North Road, for highwaymen going to business, and couples running away to Gretna Green. At this time Grimaldi was darting through the byways with a coat thrown over his clown's dress to work his double "turns" at Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells, and poor old convivial Charles Lamb, in a high-collared coat and black gaiters, was staggering home from the Sir Hugh Myddleton to his cottage in Colebrooke Row, and playfully throwing stones at the passers-by in an excess of practical humour. It was always a common neighbourhood.

The Angel, standing at the junction of five or six important roads, is the natural station from which omnibus proprietors calculate their fares, and it is the station at which economical passengers ascend or descend. When the good old Conservative system of sixpenny through fares was given up under competition for broken journeys varying from twopence to fourpence, when gas developed, and tramcars made their appearance, The Angel changed its character. It ceased to be an inn, tavern, or hotel, such as you meet with in a substantial country town, and became a flaring London gin-shop.

In front of this temple of Bacchus the "sweepings" of Islington, of St. John Street Road, of

the City Road, of Goswell Street, and of Pentonville deposited themselves. Why such people were made it is difficult to say; but there they were, and in rather overwhelming numbers. Nature prides herself on quantity even more than quality. As tax-paying machines they may be useful, but they know nothing of art; and art, in its turn, knows nothing of them. They live in an atmosphere of chromo-lithographs, their furniture comes from Tottenham Court Road, and their clothes are bought at a cheap clothier's at Battle Bridge.

From one of the Pentonville 'buses a young woman descended, who paid her twopence with a giggle, and was politely, not to say gallantly, handed down the steps by the conductor. She was, oddly enough for such people, rather good-looking. She was met on the kerbstone by a young man who was evidently dressed in his Sunday clothes, and whose manner showed that he was "keeping company" with the young woman.

"You don't call this nine o'clock?" he said.

"I couldn't get here before," she replied; "an old woman and four daughters came in about eight to buy some bonnets, and I thought we should never serve them."

She was an assistant at a milliner's in the Edgware Road.

"I got away a little earlier to-night," he said, "as they are having the shop whitewashed."

He was an assistant at a "Drapery Establishment"—something superior to a shop—in the City Road.

"Take anything?" he asked.

"Rather," she replied quickly.

They passed The Angel, and sought a less-obtrusive pothouse. One presented itself that was not offensively lighted, but it had this placarded in the window:

"Siste, Viator! Scientiæ potusque combinatio. Intra, biba, suscipe, solve. A glass of ale and an electric shock for fourpence!"

This scarcely looked promising, and they sought a "coffee-shop," one of those places with a dusty roll, a dirty teapot, and two egg-shells in the window. They entered, and sat in a box like an uncomfortable pew. There was a greasy copy of an old weekly paper on the table, and a chipped draught-board within easy distance. The room was called "A Coffee and Reading Room."

"Two cups and two thick slices," said the young man.

The food was brought. The coffee was a thick, muddy, brown liquid that neither cheered nor inebriated. The pair were rather silent.

"You seem rather sulky to-night, Annie," said the young man. He was not tall, and was not handsome. His face had a pasty look, the result of confinement in the bad atmosphere of an "Emporium," breathing a large amount of foul gas, the purity of which was theoretically guaranteed by Act of Parliament. He did not look a pushing young man, though his lot was cast in a pushing place. The "Emporium" or "Establishment" was a driving, cutting, jobbing shop, the master of which was his own shop-walker, and always in a perspiration. They called him Three-farthing Jenkins, because his price always ended in three-farthings. He lived by "selling off," always at an immense loss, and he addressed his young men in the language of the poet (slightly altered):

> Awake each morn, and early rise,
> To make an "awful sacrifice."

Annie was still silent, and the outdoor assistant repeated the question.

"How long have we been keeping company, Edward?" she asked.

"Three years; perhaps nearly four," was the answer.

"We are not getting younger, Edward."

"It's no use marrying till I've got a home to give you."

"You might have had one before now, if you'd not wasted your money on others."

"You cannot accuse me, Annie, of wasting it on myself," he answered reproachfully. As he spoke, he looked in her face, and, pasty as his complexion was, and commonplace, not to say vulgar, as he appeared, there was a look of good and true humanity in his eyes, though he worked behind a counter in the City Road, and was talking to the sweepings of a Pentonville omnibus.

"If it was your own flesh and blood," she continued sulkily, "I shouldn't wonder; and all my friends and relations think the same."

"I gave my promise to those who are dead," he replied firmly, "and nothing on earth will make me break it."

There is probably no great virtue in a man being able and determined to keep his word, but still many people of distinction have been wanting in this quality.

The quarrel between the two lovers had not got to an end when they sighted the alluvial deposit at the bottom of the muddy coffee. He saw her to her return 'bus at the corner of Pentonville Hill, and they parted, she in sulkiness and he in anger.

The cause of this quarrel was a little, crippled, helpless boy, who had been literally taken out of the gutter by the outdoor assistant. The boy's grandmother had kept a stall by the City Road Turnpike (turnpikes were tolerated in those days), against the dead wall of a vinegar factory, which stands there to this hour. She sold ballads displayed on an old clothes-horse, and filled up her spare time by knitting kettle-holders. On one side of her stood a voluble gentleman who sold corn-salve, and could talk a horse's hind-leg off; and on the other side was a walking-stick merchant, who filled up her spare time by mending umbrellas. The old woman made herself comfortable in the winter in an old hooded leather chair studded with brass nails, that had evidently stood one time in the hall of some great Georgian mansion at the West, or sacred end of London, and had given shelter to one or two generations of sleepy porters, whose duty it was to see the household in before latchkeys had been invented. Its seat had probably nursed the feet of dukes while their buckles were being fastened, and its framework may have been swept by the hooped farthingales of duchesses. The child was warmly housed in a cradle, at the old woman's feet, that was made out of a trunk or packing-case.

The outdoor assistant lived in a street running

off the City Road, that for some reason or other had taken the name of Baldwin. It was not an art street, much less an æsthetic street; it was not lovely to look upon, and less lovely to live in, and yet scores of people were born in it, suffered in it, and died in it. The houses were monotonous, uniform, dull, ugly, and squalid. The street and neighbourhood, nevertheless, had a few elevating associations for those who took the trouble to dig for them. The old mediæval spring of St. Agnes le Clair—a remnant of the monastic times of Clerkenwell—was still flowing, and utilised as a twopenny bath long before philanthropic "Baths and Wash-houses" were invented. Not far off was the lane in which blind Milton sat in his garden, devolving his rounded periods, and the place where stood the theatre in which Allen, manager, actor, bull-baiter, and pious founder, made the money which he left to the country as the gift of God. At the very top of Baldwin Street was one of his blocks of Almshouses. Those who lived in Baldwin Street were mostly content with one room, and our outdoor assistant was no exception to this rule. The house in which he lived was divided into tenements. The front parlour was a small sweetstuff shop, in which hardbake and toffy were sold to sweet-toothed children possessed of halfpence; the back parlour was let to a police-

man; the first-floor front was let to a working cooper in Whitbread's Brewery in Barbican, a well-to-do mechanic, and the first-floor back to a journeyman butcher. The second-floor front was the home of our outdoor assistant, and the back room was occupied by the old stall-keeper and her crippled grandson. Every morning before going to his post behind his counter our outdoor assistant used to help the old woman down with her huge leather chair, and her box-cradle containing her little grandson, and in this way an intimacy sprang up between them closer than might otherwise have existed between two fellow-lodgers. The old woman had told her simple story to the outdoor assistant. Her daughter had lived in service in "one of the squares," and had "made a fool of herself" with a fellow-servant who had "gone for a soldier." The daughter died and left the mother the child and the old leather chair, which had been given to her with a few clothes and a little money by her mistress.

One night, during a more than usually severe winter, our outdoor assistant was called into the old woman's room, to find that her troubles were near their ending. She was mumbling over the names of some of the ballads she had been selling for years to the public, interspersed with verses of a comic song called "Jim Crow"—a song that at

that time was absurdly popular. The sight of her only friend, the outdoor assistant, brought her back to reason. She gave him her little humble articles of furniture, her stock-in-trade, a few shillings and halfpence in money, and made him promise to look after the little pale-faced cripple. This promise obtained, she asked to be lifted into the old leather chair, but before she could reach it she fell dead.

Thus it was that the outdoor assistant found himself the possessor of a child—a child that was alone in the world and helpless. There are matter-of-course crimes, and matter-of-course virtues, and the outdoor assistant did not see a heavenly nimbus shining over his head because he was indulging in the luxury of keeping an orphan. If he had not kept the child he would probably have kept a dog, or a bird, or might have had a pigeon-house on the top of his tiles, like some of his neighbours. He might have wasted what little spare time or money he had—which was very little—in the "good dry skittle-ground" attached to the public-house at the end of his street, or he might have spent more sixpences than he could well afford in seeing the greatest tragic-comic actor of the age—the late Frederick Robson—who was playing at the adjacent Eagle, before an audience who smoked pipes and

drank rum and water in the stalls, although they enjoyed the performance.

Little City Road Dick—as they called the child—had rather a dull time of it during the day, though the outdoor assistant ran over as often as possible, and the cooper's wife, and one or two other people in the house, devoted as much time to the orphan as they could well spare from their own children. He was a trifle fretful, and wanted more toys than he got; but the City Road, unlike the sacred West, is not prolific in the breed of angelic children. When he smelt the fumes of the toffy coming up the stairs from the sweetstuff shop below, he was not altogether easy until a piece was brought him, and not particular as to how it was paid for.

Sunday morning was his great holiday. Then the outdoor assistant was his own master for a few hours, and he took Little Dick to a small patch of garden ground at Hoxton, which was hired by a mutual friend, who broke the Sabbath by cultivating it. Right and left of it were many patches of similar garden ground, held and cultivated in the same way—a chess-board of homely flowers intermixed with practical vegetables. Each patch had its little summer-house, some painted more gaudily than others, and most of them, I grieve to say, well furnished with pipes, beer, and

tobacco. Here Little Dick, sitting in the basket-on-wheels in which he had been dragged to the gardens, enjoyed as much of the open air as the surrounding houses allowed him. The speculative builder had already made his appearance in the district, the streets of linked dulness long drawn out were planned, and the half-rural days of the suburb were numbered.

A day or two before the outdoor assistant had met his dissatisfied Annie at The Angel, little City Road Dick had become seriously ill, and the doctor called in from the adjoining "dispensary" shook his head. Strong children are sometimes made by night and day exposure in the streets, but they are strong in spite of and not in consequence of their exposure. There was something wrong with little Dick's chest, and the medical attendant did not cudgel his brains much to give the wrong a fine title. If he had lived in the sacred West, and not in the City Road, he would have talked about turtle soup, the sunny side of peaches, and the balmy air of the Riviera. Probably he had never heard of the Riviera, and a merciful thing too. He might as well have suggested Paradise.

The consultation resulted in a suggested "change of air," and change of air in those days and in that neighbourhood meant a voyage to Gravesend.

The seaside was little known, and railways were in their boyhood.

It was in July—the "summer stock" at the Emporium had been well pushed off, as usual, at an "immense loss," and Three-farthing Jenkins was in an amiable temper. The outdoor assistant got a couple of days' holiday with little trouble, and wrote to his young woman to say what he intended doing. An answer came from the Edgware Road, returning an engaged ring, two or three old valentines, and a lock of hair, with an intimation that her friends had advised her to marry a commercial traveller in a large City house, who was not bitten with a fancy for adopting orphans.

The outdoor assistant was not altogether unprepared for this reply, and it failed to turn him from his purpose. He took the little cripple to Old Swan Pier, near London Bridge, and they went on board one of the largest of the Gravesend steamboats. The child was brought in contact with a new and wonderful world—a world that has even astonished greater and wiser people. He saw the forest of shipping—the huge ships going and coming, the busy wharves, the toiling men, the incessant work and movement. "What are they doing? Where are they going?" he asked.

"Abroad," said the outdoor assistant, whose knowledge of geography was somewhat limited.

"Is abroad far?" inquired the child.

"It may be," said the outdoor assistant, rather evasively.

"I am going abroad," said the child, just as they sighted the wooded hills of Kent; and long before they reached the broad stream at Erith he closed his eyes for some little time and then opened them feebly, saying, "Good-bye, God bless you!"

The outdoor assistant spent the rest of his short holiday in returning to the City Road, and finding a last resting-place for the little cripple. He buried him in the common burial-ground of Bunhill Fields, where some time before he had buried his old grandmother. They were surrounded by common people, and were not far from the tomb of the wandering tinker who wrote the "Pilgrim's Progress."

THE LOST DIAMOND.

ON my first entry into the business world I was reluctantly made familiar with a place called St. Winifred's Court. It stood in Crooked Friars, at the eastern end of the City, and consisted of about a dozen old houses built round a soppy wooden pump. The paving-stones were damp, uneven, and full of holes; the entrance was by a gate with an iron grating, that always stuck fast, half open and half shut; and the general appearance of the place, seen through this rusty grating, was that of a very miserable, deserted prison-yard.

One side of this secluded square had long been given up to ruin, dirt, and decay. Four houses, in that condition popularly known as "Chancery," were resigned by the police to their dismal fate; and, if no placards were stuck over them, it was only because no advertising in such a position would have

returned the cost of paste. They were said to be haunted by all kinds of City ghosts; by old wrinkled men, whose left hands were full of gold, and whose right hands were stained with blood; and the green-coated boys of St. Winifred's free school had beaten their poor old faces with mud and stones, until nothing but a few sharp teeth of dirty glass could be counted in their black and sightless window-frames.

The houses immediately facing these melancholy brick spectres were dark and repulsive, and always seemed to be frowning upon their opposite neighbours. It was in one of these, the one called Number Seventeen—although the number had long been worn off the doorway, or covered with dirt—that I went to my first situation.

The picture of the City that I had formed in my mind, as I lived in the country, was that of a town all life, all enterprise, and all activity; a place where the restless stream of commerce was always flowing along the broad highways, surging up lofty staircases, and pouring down into deep cellars. I was not prepared to find a sullen little harbour of refuge, like St. Winifred's Court; a corner that stood on one side out of the way, as if to let the eager crowd pass by. Having found it, however, I was not surprised to learn the character of some

of its occupants; and my master was a very fair type of all those who allowed their business to be known. He called himself a "shipping-agent," for want of a better name, but he was quite ready to turn partnership-negotiator, picture-dealer, or even proctor, upon the slightest encouragement. He had no mercantile connections, but he always expected them to drop in, and, in the meantime, he lived upon his wife's property, and came down occasionally to see if there were any letters. My duty was simply to mind the office; and this I did. The two rooms were very dull, heavy, and scantily furnished, in a dark corridor on the first floor, and I was rapidly becoming almost as dull and as heavy, for want of something to do. We both cost our master very little, and we were both kept on with some degree of lingering hope, and, in an equal degree, perhaps, for show. I counted the ink-spots on the wall; the carved acorns over the fireplace; I dozed over the blazing coals; I read the Commercial Almanack, until I was sick of its name, its pictures, and its facts; and I listened to the hour-bells as they pealed from every neighbouring church. I seldom looked out of the long, narrow windows in front, because they faced the ruined houses, and I drew down the yellow dusty blinds to protect myself from those sightless brick faces which always seemed to be staring at

me. Young as I was (about thirteen years of age), I knew that such monastic seclusion, such hopeless stagnation, could not mean business; but, with the natural indolence of human nature, I still remained.

There was no one in the house, from garret to basement, who cared to keep me company. Occasionally I heard a footstep on the stairs, or the slamming of a distant door, but the sounds soon died away. The old woman who took care of the premises, and lived in a musty attic just under the tiles, came down about once a day with a broken pitcher to fetch some water from the pump, but she seldom lingered on her road. She seemed to be averse to conversation, or, probably, not equal to it; and when I asked her any questions concerning the other lodgers in St. Winifred's Court, about whom I felt a strong curiosity, her invariable reply was, "I never meddles nor makes."

As I wanted occupation of some interesting kind, I was far from being of this old woman's apparent disposition. I was not at liberty to leave the office between the hours of ten and five (in case somebody *might* call, or something *might* come in), and I therefore employed myself in trying to find out who and what the different inmates of Number Seventeen might be. The information I gathered

was scarcely worth the labour and patience that it cost. Except in one instance, I found, or thought I found them very similar to my master—lingerers at the roadside of commerce; firms with no more capital or credit than was sufficient to paint a couple of names upon a doorway; and agents who were waiting for commissions which never came. The one exception required far more than a few views, a few inquiries, and some clever guessing, to make out his profession or trade.

As I was going down the office stairs one snowy afternoon in the depth of winter, to look at a large snowball that the St. Winifred boys had piled up in the court, I met an old man coming in at the doorway, whom I never remembered having seen in St. Winifred's Court before. His costume was strange, and almost foreign in appearance; his boots were heavy, and worn outside his trousers like a fisherman's; his coat was long, and bound round the waist with a belt; his dark waistcoat was fastened up to his chin, like a shirt; and his long flowing gray beard, which fell over this latter garment, was full of white flakes of snow. He was evidently a Jew, and he stooped a little as he came in, and went mumbling up the staircase, neither looking to the right nor left. He stopped on the first landing, not far from our office, and shortly

afterwards I heard the sound of a key opening a lock, and the closing of a door.

My curiosity was much excited by this stranger, especially as he had entered a room whose exterior had often come under my notice. The names of Mahol and Ethan were on the doorway, a mysterious sounding title that told me nothing; and my inquiry of the office-keeper did not increase my knowledge. Whether he was Mr. Mahol, or Mr. Ethan; or whether he represented both those gentlemen; whether he dealt in silk, coal, corn, or old rags, or whether he dealt in anything at all, no one seemed to know or to care. I might not have taken this deep interest in his personality and occupation if I had had any business of my own or my master's to attend to; but, as it was, I devoted all my energies to watch him and his room, as if I had been a detective officer engaged in investigating a great crime.

He came very seldom to his office, even for a regular dweller in St. Winifred's Court; and although silence was the rule all through every house in that City hermitage, the silence always seemed to me deeper than usual in Messrs. Mahol and Ethan's apartment. What made this more remarkable was, that the old Jew never looked like a man who consumed his time in idleness or

rest. He was never in a hurry, either coming or going; but there were unmistakable signs in his face that mental work of some kind was always going on. I began, in my ignorance, by supposing him a coiner; and there is no saying where I should have ended, if the construction of the house had not enabled me to satisfy my curiosity to a large degree, and clear his character at the same time.

I have explained before that the rooms retained by my master as an office were on the first floor, and in the front of the house. Passing by our door, to the end of a short passage, you came to the room of Messrs. Mahol and Ethan, which ran at right angles to ours, and was lighted by a small side window, looking into a back-yard. This room, while it was joined by other rooms along the side passage, did not actually join the apartment in which I was accustomed to sit, but it partly joined a smaller inner room, that would have been used by my master if he had attended at the office; and it shared the wall of a large cupboard, that nearly took up the whole of one end. It was not long before I found a means of drilling an eye-hole through the wainscoting of this cupboard, which gave me nearly a full view of the old man's room, and more particularly of its farther side. I was not ashamed of doing this then, though I am

ashamed of the recollection now; but the moral sense only grows and strengthens with age. I was young at the time, and my excuse must be the idle position in which I was placed.

When I was in the cupboard the door was closed, and therefore no light could break through my eye-hole; and when I left it, I stopped the hole carefully with whitened cork.

The first survey which I made certainly showed me more than the key-hole had done before, but it did not make me much wiser. There was nothing very mysterious about the apartment; the furniture was the usual office furniture, with the exception of an old, carved, high-backed, velvet chair; a couple of small dark pictures were lying one over the other against the wall: there was a little pair of scales, and a piece of wash-leather on the window-sill; and a door at the farther side, leading into an inner room, was exactly like the door I was compelled to pass through to get at my cupboard. I confess I was much disappointed with the results of this examination, and if nothing more had occurred to rouse my curiosity, I should most probably have stopped up the hole I had made, and have left the old Jew and my situation together. Something more, however, did occur, and something very singular and unexpected.

One clear winter's afternoon, about four o'clock, I was rather astonished to hear an unusual tramping on the stairs, accompanied by many voices speaking in an unfamiliar guttural tongue. Peeping cautiously out of my room, I saw half-a-dozen short bearded men, led on by the old Jew, whom they strongly resembled. They passed into his apartment, the door of which was soon closed behind them and locked. I immediately took up my position at the secret eye-hole, and found them helping to cover a long office table with a black velvet cloth, that looked to me like an old pall. When this inquisitorial-looking bench was made into something very like a broad coffin, it was pushed near to the single window, under the light, and the seven strange old men slowly and solemnly took their places round three of its sides, as if they were settling down to dinner. The voices that had been so loud and fluent on the stairs were now almost hushed, and, when everyone had found a seat, a most venerable rabbi-looking Jew took the high-backed velvet chair, and presided over the singular meeting.

From this moment not a word was spoken, but every man drew a small casket from his bosom —apparently from the depths of his beard. These

caskets were carefully opened, and seven white sparkling gems were soon placed on the black velvet table-cloth. Each diamond (for diamonds they were) was planted so that every man at the table could see it, and yet was not trusted beyond the reach, or even from under the hovering hands, of its restless owner. The bearded heads were bent down; the sharp eyes were glancing rapidly backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, right and left; the long yellow fingers were twitching with pent-up excitement; and the wrinkled brows were frowning with deep active thought. At last, after about ten minutes, which seemed a year, a sudden movement of the jewel in front of the old Jew (whom I looked upon as representing Mahol, or Ethan, or both) seemed to bring out some ray of beauty that all had been eagerly watching for, but which none had been able to discover before. The long silence was broken and the storm burst.

"He'sh got it! Reubel hash got it!" was yelled by every voice. There was much of envy in their tones, and something of admiration. They were all upon their feet at once, throwing up their arms, spluttering through their beards, grasping their inferior jewels which had been beaten in the show,

bidding wildly at my old Jew over each other's heads, and shouting loudly, "Reubel hash got it! Reubel hash got it!"

How long this tumult would have lasted, or who would have been torn to pieces, it is impossible to say, had not "Reubel" produced order by making signs that he did not consider it wise to spread the news of his wealth and good fortune all over St. Winifred's Court. This hint was understood, and as the trial (for trial it was) had ended, and the verdict had been given in such an unmistakable manner, the judges reluctantly departed, as no business was to be done, leaving Reubel and the old rabbi-looking Jew together.

"Chalcol," said the old diamond merchant, addressing the venerable Jew, as soon as the last footstep had died away, "Dare's more of 'em! Dare musht be more!"

"Reubel," returned the old man, "the journey ish long; I am growing faint and weak; and musht touch the blessed city before I die."

"So musht ve all, Chalcol, so musht ve all. Time enough for that; time enough for that."

"Dere ish ten darics of gold," said the venerable Jew, placing some coins in Reubel's hand, "and all the rest ish gone. I have been out from the month of Casleu to Casleu, and round to Casleu

again. I have crossed Brazil from side to side; and more, I have been to the shores of the Great Sea."

"And you'll go again, Chalcol—you'll go again?"

"No, Reubel, no. I have suffered much, and ve have now vat brings us millions of silver shekels. Twice on my journey home have I seen the beloved hand of my lost Rebeka pointing towards the East. I mushtn't shut mine eyes."

They drew closer together in the dusk, after this, and their voices fell to an indistinct whisper. I still watched them with a strange feeling of fascination, although I had gathered from their conversation, and the scene that had passed before me, nearly all that I wanted to know. They were partners in that singular business, the diamond trade, and their names were Reubel Mahol and Chalcol Ethan; the Mahol and Ethan that I had observed upon the doorway. Chalcol, the man who had looked the eldest, was the travelling partner, and the one, perhaps, with the least capital; while Reubel, the man who looked the youngest, was the partner who managed the home affairs of the firm.

They were not long before they separated for the night, and seemingly, for some time; Reubel lighting a cup-shaped oil-lamp, and preparing to write, as Chalcol went to the door.

"Before the month is out, then?" said Reubel.

"Before Tebeth," returned Chalcol, as he lingered in the doorway, "I shall be with you again."

Reubel Mahol took the pall-like cloth from his office table as soon as his partner had gone, and placed the lamp and some writing materials in its place. He looked at the glittering diamond, as large as a small oyster, for several minutes, under the lamp, as if in a trance of calculation and delight. He then returned it anxiously to his bosom, among the wiry tresses of his beard, as if it had been a bird. This done, he carefully folded the velvet pall in his arms, and selecting a key from a bunch which he drew out of a pouch in his gabardine, he went through the little door at the other end of the apartment into the inner room.

As it was growing near five o'clock in the evening, and was quite dark, I seized this moment for going into our front office and locking the door, as if I had left for the night. It is impossible for me to tell why I did this, especially as my curiosity had been well fed during the latter part of the afternoon. Perhaps there was something about the picture of an old and rather dirty man, who carried a bauble under his beard that would have bought a dozen courts of St. Winifred, which had a charm to drag me back. Perhaps I felt a sense of power in watching one who had grown grimy in the ways of the world, at

a moment when he thought there was no necessity for wearing a disguise. Whatever it was that moved me, I returned in the dark to my eye-hole, and resumed my watch.

The old man had apparently been out of the inner room while I was away, and had fetched the lamp, for I could see its light glittering through the crevices of the small doorway, while the front apartment was almost dark. He appeared to be moving about rather rapidly, first stooping, then rising, and afterwards throwing up his arms, as if he was changing his dress. Five minutes may have been consumed in this manner, when the door slowly opened, and *another face*—a coarse, evil face—came out of the inner room in Reubel Mahol's clothes. I could not have been deceived in this, as the face was full towards me, and the stranger—a taller, and much more upright man than Reubel Mahol—held the cup-shaped lamp in his hand. He lost no time in pulling the old Jewish gabardine round his chin, as he wore very little beard, and in blowing out the light. The place was then left in utter darkness; but I heard him closing the office door, which had a peculiar spring-lock, and shut with a click, and I then heard his retreating footsteps as he left the house, and passed out of St. Winifred's Court.

My watching was brought abruptly to an end, and although I wished myself miles away from the office on the stairs, I scarcely had the courage and decision to move from my hiding-place. To look into the dark, silent room of the old diamond merchants was now more than I had nerve to do. I felt as if some great crime had been committed —I hardly knew what—and that I was in a position which, at any moment, might lead me into trouble. Although I had been on the premises nearly a year-and-a-half, I knew no one, and could trust no one. I slunk quietly out, at last, with a beating heart, and was thankful to gain the noise and light of the busy thoroughfares without any followers at my heels.

I did not venture back to my office the next day, nor the next. I sent an excuse to my master that I was ill. It was scarcely an excuse, for I was torn by many doubts and anxieties. I felt that I ought to divulge what I had seen in the old diamond merchants' office, but I had no heart to begin. My mother and all my friends were living in a distant part of the country; I had no one in whom I could confide, and the people with whom I lodged were lodging-house keepers, and nothing more. At times I tried to persuade myself that I was labouring under a delusion, that I had fallen asleep at my watching-

post, and even that I had never watched at all. The coarse, evil face in Reubel Mahol's clothes was always present to disprove this; it was with me when I closed my eyes; it was with me when I watched in the crowded streets; above all, it was with me when I was alone.

To get rid of this mental phantom, I drew it bodily upon paper, although I was little skilled in the draughtsman's art. I made and destroyed at least a hundred sketches before I was satisfied with my work. I got it at last, a dark, lowering etching in pen and ink; and I felt the same relief as if I had given a distinct existence to some idea that had been haunting me day and night for years.

I could not remain away from St. Winifred's Court. If the same curiosity that had prompted me to make the eye-hole, had not also prompted me to see the end of what it had showed me, it might have been necessary for my safety that I should return to what was called business, without delay. A discovery of any crime, such as I had reason to think had been committed, coupled with my unusual absence from my duty, might have turned a flood of suspicion upon me. The sixth morning, therefore, from the night of the yet unsolved mystery, found me, with trembling hands, again unlocking our dull office door.

There was not a sign of any discovery, any business, or any change. The house was as dark and as silent as ever, the yard was just as damp and as miserable, and the ruined houses opposite were just as ghastly. It was more than one hour before I ventured to look through the eye-hole at the old diamond merchant's room. It had evidently been unopened and undisturbed. The writing-paper was on the table, as Reubel Mahol had placed it, as well as the extinguished lamp, that had been placed there by the stranger. A couple of letters had been thrown through the letter-hole of the office door, and were lying on the floor in the dust. The door of the inner room was only slightly ajar.

The month of November nearly expired without any discovery being made, and it was not until the twenty-ninth that the old diamond merchant's office was opened. On that day, about noon, I heard the peculiar sound of a key turning in the strange lock, and looking out I saw that it was Chalcol Ethan. My throat was parched like a bit of coke, as he entered the office, and, in another moment, I heard a wild yell, and the bumping of a body on the ground. I felt sick and faint, and unable to move. Two men, who were coming down an upper flight of stairs, and the

old woman of the house, with a market-basket on her arm, were the first to go into the inner room, and, emboldened by their leading, I slunk in rather than followed. I found old Chalcol Ethan tearing his hair and beating his breast, as he rapidly wailed out something in a strange tongue, and knelt over the dead and half-stripped body of Reubel Mahol.

An investigation followed in due course, as the old diamond merchant was supposed to have been strangled. I never felt so much like a thief, or something worse, as when I heard the usual coroner's verdict of "murder against some person or persons unknown," and yet had not nerve to be more than a silent witness. There were many suppositions as to the mode in which access had been got to the office to commit the crime, and the most sensible pointed to an obvious passage from the roof down the broad and ancient chimney.

Old Chalcol Ethan was loud in his general lamentations about his loss of property, but he never alluded, in any way, to the lost diamond. He took the body of his dead partner that it might be buried according to the customs of his people, and went, so it was understood, to end his days in the Holy City.

It was twenty years after this, when I had

burst out of St. Winifred's Court, and had established myself in the world, that I stumbled upon the necessary links to complete the story of the old diamond merchants. I had never forgotten the face of the strange man I had seen coming out of that inner room, and I had still preserved his pen-and-ink portrait. This portrait had a place in a portfolio of sketches and engravings, and one evening it caught the eye of an intimate friend—a young barrister who was compelled not to be very select in his business.

"How long," he said, "have you taken to draw from the heads of my criminal clients?"

"Your clients?" I asked, with astonishment and interest.

"My clients," he returned; "this man, a trifle older, has just retained me for his defence, and his trial for burglary is adjourned to the next session."

I found I was obliged to relate my story, but I did it upon a condition that was immediately complied with—that I should have a private interview with the prisoner in Newgate, in the character of one of his solicitors. The next day I was ace to face with the man I had been seeking for more than twenty years. I found him much altered, except about the eyes, and rather sulky and uncommunicative. When he discovered that

I knew of his crime in St. Winifred's Court, he was a little more civil, but still all the information I got had to be dragged from him.

It appeared that, at that time, he belonged to a gang of thieves who confined their depredations to the city. As he and two others had been professional sweeps, they availed themselves of their skill in descending chimneys; and by taking possession of the ruined houses in St. Winifred's Court, they were enabled to command an extensive field of roofs, with little fear of interruption.

The gang had learnt something which gave them a rude idea that Mahol and Ethan were persons worthy of attack, if they could only select the proper moment to attack them. They were bold almost to carelessness in St. Winifred's Court, as they knew it was a lonely quarter of the city. Twice the prisoner had been down into the inner office of the old Jew merchants, to find nothing but a few dusty articles of furniture, and a small iron safe, securely locked. The third time he went down, he selected a moment when Reubel Mahol was within, and waited for his opportunity.

He heard the conference of the diamond judges, and the conversation of the two partners, without understanding to what they referred. He even saw old Reubel through the crevice of the door, gazing

at his treasure under the lamp, and was in ignorance of its character and its value.

He was guiltless of the old Jew's murder. When Reubel Mahol went into the inner room, he threw himself upon him, and tried to gag him, but the old diamond merchant thrust something hastily into his mouth, and seemed to die in a fit. When he found that matters had assumed this serious aspect, he determined not to return to the gang, and after taking all the money he could find, and disguising himself in Reubel Mahol's clothes, he left the office without being observed by his companions.

This was, in substance, the confession of the prisoner; and as he had nothing to gain by deceiving me, and I had found him truthful in many points which he had no reason to suppose me familiar with, I was compelled to believe him. The great diamond had evidently not fallen to him, and it is most probable that Reubel Mahol had suffocated himself in trying to swallow it. Whether it was buried with him, and where he was buried, are more than I can tell; and Chalcol Ethan, the only man perhaps, in the secret, must long since have been gathered to his fathers.

A SLAVE CAPTAIN.

THERE is probably scarcely a full-grown person in this kingdom, who, in connection with the slave trade, has not heard of the "horrors of the middle passage." The pictures that we have had presented to us of the treatment of negroes in their transit from Africa to America have invariably been of the most horrible and heart-rending kind. Doubtless there is much painful truth in the statements of the sufferings of the slaves in their journey from the interior to the coast, and afterwards in their passage across the Atlantic, even after allowing for the pardonable colouring imparted to such statements by the sensitive humanity of those noble and disinterested men, who, amidst all the false principles and venal legislation of the latter part of the last, and the commencement of the present century, lived and moved for no other end

than to endeavour to put down an unjust, unchristian, and nefarious traffic. Seventy years of English labour, twenty millions of English money, and an African squadron, kept up by English capital at an annual cost of half-a-million, have been powerless, however, to extinguish the trade in human beings in any places except our own colonies. At this present time there exists an annual exportation of more than one hundred thousand negroes from the coast of Africa to Cuba, the Southern States of North America, and the French, Dutch, and Portuguese settlements. As the shipments are contraband, they are carried on in vessels constructed more for rapid sailing than commodious stowage, and the sufferings of the unfortunate negroes are consequently increased. Still, the demand for slave-labour is so great, and the price offered for the negro is so high, that the trade is immensely lucrative, even after allowing for the loss of one-half the cargo by death from close packing, or throwing overboard, to lighten the vessel during the heat of a chase. It is a melancholy and an appalling fact—a fact that ought to call Clarkson and Wilberforce from their graves—that the condition of the negro during the sea-transit is ten times worse at the present time than it was when the trade was legal. The only operation of the so-called Abolition Bills has been to impose

difficulties in the way of supply, without destroying to any great extent the demand, and the inevitable result is an increase of price for the human commodity.

The slave trade of a hundred years ago may have been conducted badly and cruelly in individual instances, by brutal captains, such as, unfortunately, we have at the present time in our ordinary merchant service; but, I have materials before me that will enable me to give a tolerably authentic picture of a slave captain of 1790, who may have been a very favourable specimen of his class.

Captain Hugh Crow was born in the town of Ramsay, Isle of Man, in the year 1765. When very young he lost his right eye; and when only twelve years of age he was nearly drowned, but was preserved to pass the chief part of his life on the element that threatened to destroy him in his youth. Being brought up at a seaport town, he imbibed an inclination for a seafaring life; and, after two years' labour as a boat-builder, he went his first voyage in the spring of 1782. While at Cork, before setting sail under convoy for Barbadoes, he saw, for the first time, great scenes of oppression and distress under the cruel system of impressment. He saw sailors swimming from ship to ship to escape the press-gang; some nearly smothered by stowing

themselves away in confined places below decks; others, who were not fortunate enough to escape, dragged on board by the hair of their heads.

In October, 1783, he set sail for the coast of America; and at Charleston he saw several vessels arrived from Ireland crowded with poor labourers, who were to be sold for so many years, by the captains, to defray the cost of their passage out. Among them were many half-starved poor creatures, who were advertised to be sold to the highest bidder; and at the sale, while the whites were bidding, the blacks, who attended in large numbers, would indulge their love of fun at the expense of the poor Irishmen, by exclaiming: "One dollar more for 'em da; I have 'em. Three bit more for 'em da; I have 'em. Negra buy buckra now!" Such scenes as these, if nothing else, must have inclined him to look upon the slave trade with calmness instead of horror.

In 1789 he had several offers to go as mate to the coast of Africa, but he refused them, having not yet overcome his repugnance to the slave trade; but in 1790 his friends overruled his objections, and he was appointed chief mate to a fine brig, and sailed on his first voyage to the slave country. His visit gave him a favourable opinion of the blacks, espe-

cially of the natives of Benin, whom he found to be a truly fine, tractable race of people. His affection for the negro increased with time, and in every case it seems to have been fully returned. On the occasion of his second voyage to New Calabar, soon after they had weighed anchor with a cargo of negroes, they were overtaken by a tornado, with thunder, lightning, and rain, and before they could take in sail or let go the anchor, they were driven ashore. The storm and darkness of the night made their situation one of imminent peril. To lighten the ship they employed gangs in starting the water-casks and heaving the firewood over. The ship began to lie over almost on her beam-ends; and dreading that the poor blacks below, whose cries were most distressing, might be suffocated, they allowed them to come on deck at the risk of their own lives; for they outnumbered the crew in the proportion of ten to one. Their chief dependence was upon the good disposition of sixty of the negroes whom they had shipped on the windward coast, a race superior to those of New Calabar. The confidence was not misplaced; for, perceiving the danger, they were so active to assist, that they were mainly instrumental in saving the ship. During this voyage, one of these windward coast men fell overboard, and the studding

sails being set at the time below and aloft, the ship was running at the rate of seven or eight knots, and it was some time before they could bring her to. Chief mate Hugh Crow, being anxious to save the poor fellow, if possible, prevailed upon four of the crew to accompany him, and they started in a leaky boat towards the place where they thought he had fallen, and continued to pull in search of him for about an hour; but in vain. At last, when they were about to give him up for lost, they discovered him on the point of sinking, in an exhausted condition. They got him into the crazy boat, which was half full of water, and made towards the ship; two men constantly baling, two men pulling for their lives, Hugh Crow steering, and the poor black lying on the stern-seat nearly dead. This circumstance made our future captain a great favourite with the poor grateful blacks.

In 1792, laws were made for the better regulation of the African trade, of which Hugh Crow and every person acquainted with the business heartily approved. One of these laws was, that only five blacks should be carried for every three tons' burden; and Hugh Crow thinks proper to pay an especial compliment to Mr. Wilberforce, as one of the promoters of these very proper regulations, for this wise restriction.

The following entry goes to show what was paid for negroes at Bonny, in 1810.

One piece of chintz, eighteen yards long.
One piece of baft, eighteen yards long.
One piece of chilloe, eighteen yards long.
One piece of bandanoe, seven handkerchiefs.
One piece of neccanee, fourteen yards long.
One piece of cashtoe, fourteen yards long.
One piece of photoe, fourteen yards long.
Three pieces of ramatts, forty-five handkerchiefs.
One large brass pan.
Two muskets.
Twenty-five kegs of powder.
One hundred flints.
Two bags of shot.
Twenty knives.
Four iron pots.
Four hats.
Four caps.
Four cutlasses.
Six bunches of beads.
Fourteen gallons of brandy.

The articles cost about twenty-five pounds, and in no case were negroes procured, as many have supposed, for nothing.

The diet-scale and regulations of the slaves upon the sea-passage in Hugh Crow's vessel were thoughtful, and calculated to promote the health and cleanliness of all on board. They frequently bought from the natives considerable quantities of dried shrimps

to make broth; and a very excellent dish they made, mixed with flour and palm-oil, and seasoned with pepper and salt. Both whites and blacks were fond of this mess. In addition to yams, they gave them, for a change, fine shelled beans and rice cooked together, and this was served up to each individual with a plentiful proportion of the soup. On other days their soup was mixed with pickled yams, cut up thin and boiled with a proportion of pounded biscuit. For the sick were provided strong soups, and middle messes, prepared from mutton, goat's flesh, fowls, etc., to which were added sago and lilipees, the whole mixed with port-wine and sugar. With regard to the personal comfort of the blacks, on their coming on deck about eight o'clock in the morning, water was provided to wash their hands and faces, a mixture of lime-juice to cleanse their mouths, towels to wipe with, and chew sticks (pieces of young branches of the common lime), to clean their teeth. A dram of brandy bitters was given to each, and clean spoons being served out, they breakfasted about nine o'clock. About eleven, if the day was fine, they washed their bodies all over, and after wiping themselves dry, were allowed to use palm-oil, their favourite cosmetic. Pipes and tobacco were then supplied to the men, and beads and other

articles were distributed amongst the women to amuse them; after which they were permitted to dance and run about the deck to keep them in good spirits. A middle mess of bread and cocoa-nuts was given them about midday. The third meal was served at about three o'clock, and after everything was cleaned out and arranged below for their accommodation, they were generally sent down below about four or five o'clock in the evening. A thatched house was also built on deck from stem to stern for the comfort of the slaves, and the thorough ventilation of the vessel.

Such a favourite was Captain Hugh Crow with the blacks, that on one occasion when, just as the vessel had left Bonny and sprung a leak that they stopped up as well as they could with pieces of beef, the negroes all crowded round the Captain, shaking his hand, and begging that they might be employed in assisting the crew; and by their exertions at the pumps kept the vessel afloat until assistance arrived in the morning from the coast. When an illness compelled the Captain to stay some time in the harbour of Bonny, he was invited on his recovery by the kings and the great men to visit them on shore, and spend a few weeks with them. When he reached the town, all classes were lavish

with their presents to him, and the children, amongst whom he was well known, sang after him in the streets.

Captain Crow's voyages were not undertaken without many and severe engagements with French privateers, and on the 21st of February, 1800, after an action of nine hours with one of these vessels, he came off victorious, with the loss of two slaves and with considerable damage to his ship. When the French were finally beaten off, the Captain went down below to return thanks for the victory, when the black women crowded round him with tears in their eyes, saluting him, and thanking their gods that he had overcome the enemy. In a short time after this rencontre they arrived at Kingston, Jamaica, when eight men-of-war came alongside, taking from them every man and boy they had on board, and raising reflections in the Captain's mind as to the relative cruelty of slavery and impressment. The most desperate engagement that the Captain was perhaps ever engaged in was on the night of the 1st of December, 1806, by mistake with two British men-of-war. He was hailed by these vessels in English, but he had his doubts, as he knew that French cruisers had a trick of hailing British ships in their own language when they thought deception would answer their purposes. He, therefore, calmly

replied, "No one shall bring us to in these seas in the night." Then addressing his men in a spirited manner, he prepared for action; and for six hours they fought between two heavy fires, with their masts and rigging shot away, with five blacks killed and numbers wounded, and nearly all the men more or less disabled. After a most gallant, although mistaken defence, which continued until the break of day, when he was knocked down senseless by a splinter, they were obliged to surrender, and they then discovered the error they had all committed. The damage done to the slave-ship and the two men-of-war was nearly equal, and also the loss on both sides. Captain Crow was in great distress of mind and body, expecting to be blamed by his owners for rashness in entering upon the unfortunate engagement; but to his relief, he received a certificate from the commander of Her Majesty's sloop *Dart*, the principal of the men-of-war, to the effect that he had defended his ship in a running action in a most gallant manner from what he supposed were the attacks of two French cruisers from Cayenne, and did not give up till his rigging and sails were nearly cut to pieces, and several of his people wounded. Six of these people, I may add, afterwards died.

His character, compounded of kindness and

courage, was well known to the blacks. One Sunday morning when he landed at Kingston, Jamaica, he found a number of his old black shipmates, all neatly dressed, waiting on the wharf to receive him. Some of them took hold of his hands, and the general expressions of welcome and goodwill were, "God bless massa! How massa do dis voyage! We hope massa no fight 'gen dis time." While this conversation was going on, a negro said in joke: "Who be dis Captain Crow, you all sabby so much?" and his black friends replied: "What dat you say, you black negro? Ebery dog in Kingston sabby Captain Crow, and you bad fellow for no sabby him." They then fell a-beating him with so little ceremony, although in fun, that the Captain had to interfere.

In all emergencies he did his duty. On one occasion, when a fire raged on board within three feet of the powder magazine, he went below with great courage and presence of mind, and, by his exertions and example, succeeded in extinguishing the flames. When he returned on deck the blacks — both male and female — clung around him in tears, some taking hold of his hands, some of his feet, and all with much earnestness and feeling, thanking Providence for their narrow escape.

On another occasion, when he went to Kingston, he received another very gratifying proof of the affection of his old black friends. A great number came on deck, dressed in their best, and crowding round him with gestures of respect, exclaimed: "God bless massa! How poor massa do? Long live massa, for he do fight ebery voyage!" Many of these negroes had been with him in one or other of his privateer actions, and though his attention to them, when on board, was no more than he considered proper and humane, he was deeply affected by this mark of grateful remembrance from poor creatures whom he had brought from their homes on the coast of Africa. The women were neatly dressed in calicoes and muslins, their hair was tastefully arranged, and they wore long gold earrings. The men appeared in white shirts and trousers, and flashy neckcloths, with their hair neatly plaited. The whole were at once clean and cheerful, and it gladdened the captain's heart to see them. When they left the ship he distributed amongst them a sum of money, and they bade him good-bye with hearts full of thankfulness and joy.

When I call up the form of the stout, one-eyed, courageous, kindhearted old slave captain, doing all he can to prevent savage sacrifices of human

life by the natives on the African coast; writing from slave-ports fatherly, Christian, and affectionate letters to his son upon his entrance into life, and advising him to steer clear of Lord Chesterfield and his maxims; standing up boldly and kindly for the character and intellect of the poor enslaved African, and working practically for his comfort, even in administering a false and pernicious system; jumping overboard at the risk of his own life to save a slave from drowning; and being at heart a thorough abolitionist, and not a mere transferrer of the accursed trade from good hands to bad; I give him a hearty shake of the hand even across more than three quarters of a century of time.

A GENTLE LADY MARRIED TO A MOOR.

If we were inclined to imitate the Della-Cruscan sentiment, so fashionable towards the close of the last and the beginning of the present century, we should drop a tear at the shrine of friendship, and do a variety of pretty and affecting things before we went any farther with this paper. We are about to touch upon an episode in the career of a lady of some little celebrity in her time, who, according to her own account, was not very well treated by her relatives, friends, and contemporaries. This lady, who was a leading actress of the Theatres Royal Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and Haymarket, is known in the history of the stage as Mrs. Sumbel, late Wells, and she lived in a period when she was able to quarrel with Miss Farren (afterwards Countess of Derby) on a question of their relative

ages, and when Mrs. Siddons was able to snub her for her supposed want of aptitude for her profession.

What Mrs. Sumbel, late Wells, suffered for more than thirty years, both on and off the stage, she has thought proper to inform us in her memoirs, published in the early part of the present century. In this book she speaks her mind as freely as the more celebrated Mary Robinson, one of the favourites of the Prince of Wales, spoke hers in a book issued about the same time. The dedication and preface to Mrs. Wells-Sumbel's book strike the key-note of the whole memoirs very clearly. In the first, addressed to her grandchildren and Mr. Samuel, her brother-in-law, she says:

"My Grandchildren,—You may at a future period wish to ascertain your genealogy. In this book you will find it; and should your minds not be biassed by the illiberal conduct and instructions of your grandfather, you will respect your parents. Mr. Samuel, I could not omit your name in my Dedication, as to you, principally, this work owes its birth. You have, in a great measure, been the occasion of the catalogue of miseries detailed in it. You brought *poverty* upon me, and, of *course*, I lost the affections of Major Topham."

In the preface, written by a friend, the same tone has been caught, and all mankind are accused of the basest ingratitude.

The sufferings which Mrs. Wells-Sumbel and her friend so pointedly allude to may or may not be recorded in the book, but they are not easily discovered by an impartial observer. Mrs. Wells-Sumbel appears to have been of an impulsive disposition—to state her feelings as amiably as possible—and she certainly availed herself largely of that freedom of living which was fashionable amongst many of her craft in her generation. She was not patronised by royalty in the way in which royalty then patronised the stage and its female followers, though she had the doubtful honour of performing before a Georgian audience at Georgian Weymouth; but she "took up" with several distinguished members of society, amongst whom Major Topham, the editor and proprietor of the *World* newspaper, stands prominent. During this intimacy, Mrs. Wells-Sumbel, according to her own statements, borne out, it must be admitted, by Major Topham's letters, appears to have been the editress and manager of this important organ.

To what extent Mrs. Wells-Sumbel was unfortunate in her general attachments we will not endeavour to ascertain, but will devote our attention to the two

marriages which formed part of what she would have styled her "chequered career." Her first marriage, by which she gained the name of Wells in exchange for Davis, was more like a juvenile freak than a serious engagement. She was playing Juliet at Gloucester, at the age of seventeen, when she fell in love with her Romeo, and was married at St. Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, in the course of the next season, much against the wish of her mother. After her marraige she went to Exeter with her husband, to fulfil an engagement, accompanied by her mother and sister; and shortly after her arrival Mrs. Davis received the following short and business-like letter from Mr. Wells:

"MADAME,—As your daughter is too young and childish, I beg you will for the present take her again under your protection; and be assured I shall return to her soon, as I am now going a short journey, and remain, yours, etc."

Mr. Wells never returned to reclaim his wife; and as his conduct afterwards was not very reputable—he ran away with one of his bridesmaids—Mrs. Wells consoled herself for her loss as if she had been an old woman of the world.

Passing over a variety of adventures of the kind

we have decided not to relate, we arrive at a point in the life of Mrs. Wells-Sumbel at which she was confined in the Fleet prison for debt. "I came to London," she says, "to see one of Mr. Reynolds' plays, 'How to Grow Rich.' Struck with the name, I determined to learn a lesson; but, notwithstanding the attention I paid, I benefited nothing by it. A *gentleman*—I must apologise for the misapplication of the word; but by a figure in rhetoric called *Custom*, and being a genteeler one than *blackguard* to put in a memoir, I have inserted it: however, as both are before you, choose which you please; and to end the dispute I shall say a *man*—sat next me in the box, and kept his seat during the whole performance. As I was preparing to depart, he came up to me and told me that he did not wish to prevent my seeing the performance, but was under the disagreeable necessity of telling me he had a writ against me. Upon my demanding at whose suit, the old *words*, 'On account of your brother-in-law,' assailed my ears. The vultures gnawing the liver of Prometheus were not more dreadful to him than those securities which I had entered into for Mr. Samuel were to my peace of mind."

She speaks of all the processes that had to be gone through before she could be formally committed to the Fleet, which she calls her "old habitation,"

with a degree of knowledge implying much familiarity with insolvent transactions. "On entering the prison," she says, "a foreboding of some misfortune hung over me, which the long, dark galleries rather heightened than allayed. My heart, the faithful thermometer of my feelings, misgave me. I was once more obliged to regard the troubles of this world as a bubble which would not burst till the silent mazes of a tomb would receive me in its cold embrace. The friends I had in the sunshine of my prosperity had dropped off, one by one, and I was left almost destitute."

This is a very affecting picture; but the impression it is calculated to create is soon dispelled by her description of the comfortable life she led in prison. Her forebodings were realised by her introduction to her second husband, Mr. Sumbel—the Moor, to whom she was tied like a second Desdemona. She endeavours to hold up this eccentric gentleman as a monster of cruelty, but she scarcely succeeds. We give her narrative in her own words, because no literary tinkering can improve it; and the inference we draw from it is, that the Moor loved, not wisely but too well:

"Mr. Sumbel," she says, "was born in the capital of the dominions of the Emperor of Morocco, to whom his father had been prime minister upwards of

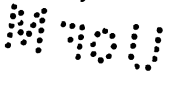
thirty years, from whence he was sent to France for his education. The numerous remittances sent to him by his father being discovered by the emperor the old man was thrown into prison, whence he contrived to make his escape to Gibraltar, to which garrison he sent considerable supplies from Mogadore, when it was defeated by the brave Eliott; this eventually occasioned his death, as he was afterwards poisoned by the intrigues of the emperor.

"Mr. Sumbel being a Jew, his two brothers went over to France to him to claim their share of their paternal inheritance, which they were entitled to do by the Mosaic law; but, to avoid coming to a settlement, he went into Holland, and from thence came over into England, where one of them followed him. On his arrival in this country he waited on Lord William Bentinck, with whom he had been acquainted on the Continent, and was by his lordship introduced to his brother, the Duke of Portland. Shortly after his coming to town he heard his brother had come over in pursuit of him; and to avoid such a disagreeable visitor he retired to the woods near Willesden Green, where he concealed himself by day, and at night got into some barn, or any place he could find to sleep. He concealed India Bonds to the amount of five thousand pounds in the hollow of an old tree, which he was never after able to find out. The

oddity of his appearance and the quantity of diamonds he had about him, which he often showed to the peasants to induce them to let him sleep in their cottages, at last created a suspicion in their minds that he must be the man who had robbed the Turkish ambassador. They accordingly determined to seize him, and give information of him at the Duke of Portland's office, which, with the assistance of the constable of the parish, they did, and tied him to a post in a stable. In this situation he remained till the duke sent a Mr. Walsh with a chaise-and-four for him. He no sooner heard the description of him than it immediately struck him it must be the same Mr. Sumbel who had been introduced to him so lately by his brother.

"The duke could not extract one word from him in answer to all the questions that were put to him. He gave written answers. Nor did he utter a syllable for three months, for some private reason which he never disclosed.

"The circumstances of his being at the duke's office reached the ears of the person who had the chancellor's writ against him, at the suit of his brother; he set off instantly, arrested him as he was coming out, and conveyed him to Wright's lock-up house in Carey Street. He continued there about six weeks; nor could they, by any means, prevail on



him to speak one word. The hearing before the chancellor at length took place, and the only answer he made to the many questions put to him by his lordship was, 'My lord, I wish you would send me to the Fleet, for that is one damned rascal' (pointing to Wright). His lordship used every argument in his power to make him come to a settlement with his brothers; but, finding he was determined to the contrary, committed him to the Fleet.

"I was in the prison at this time. He came in with all the pomp and splendour of an Eastern monarch, attended by a number of Moorish servants. A report had run through the prison that some foreign ambassador had been committed for contempt of court; and as curiosity is not the most dormant passion in the female breast, mine (you must naturally suppose) must be gratified, or peace I could not have."

Desdemona, accompanied by a lady—a fellow-prisoner—lost no time in placing herself in the way of the Moor as he walked along the gallery. The result may be anticipated. "On the following Saturday," says Desdemona, "being his Sabbath, he sent a polite invitation for me to dine with him, and bring with me any ladies I thought proper." The invitation was accepted. "On our entering the room," she continues, "which was fancifully hung with pink

satin, we found there several of the Turkish ambassador's suite, and several gentlemen of that nation. One old man, of the name of Abbo, took a fancy to me, and made formal proposals of marriage; but I rejected them with disdain, which afterwards nearly cost Mr. Sumbel and me our lives, as the old wretch actually returned to the prison to assassinate us; but timely notice enabled us to frustrate his design, and he was never afterwards permitted to enter the gates."

Deserted, as Mrs. Wells-Sumbel delights to picture herself, she appears to have had many friends, particularly of the male sex; and one gentleman at this period offered to pay all her debts and release her from prison. This circumstance came, or was purposely brought, to the knowledge of Mr. Sumbel, the unhappy Moor, and it hurried him into a proposal of marriage, which was, of course, accepted. An Insolvent Act, which was passed about this time, gave Desdemona her liberty; but she remained in the Fleet, to wed the Moor. "An obstacle," she says, "however, still stood between us, which was requisite to be got over before we could be lawfully united. My former husband, Mr. Wells, I had reason to suppose was still living, although I had neither seen nor heard from him for upwards of twenty years. Every advice was taken; and it was at last

decided I must turn Jewess, which I accordingly did, and we were married agreeably to the rites of the Jewish Church."

We have Desdemona's assertion for it that the Moor was haughty, irascible, and jealous in the extreme—bad qualities, which were counterbalanced by his youth, wealth, and handsome appearance. He was fond of display; and Desdemona, who was equally fond of it, tells us with secret pride that the marriage ceremony, though performed in a prison, was conducted with all the profusion of Eastern magnificence. "It took place," she says, "in the week of the great Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, and lasted throughout the festival. The genteel prisoners were invited to partake of the fare; and the poor were not forgotten. Four rooms were lighted up on the occasion, and a large lustre was placed in the middle of the long gallery, which cost twenty-five pounds. The sum total of the extraordinaries for that week alone came to five hundred pounds."

Desdemona, according to her own showing, prevailed upon the Moor to heal all differences with his brother by giving him twenty thousand pounds, and then to live in a style which she thought suitable to his wealth and position. They began housekeeping in Orchard Street, Portman Square, to be near the Turkish ambassador; but soon

removed to Pall Mall, to a larger mansion, next door to the Duke of Gloucester's. Desdemona was not happy, in spite of her splendour. The Moor would not allow her to sleep in the diamonds of immense value which she wore on state-days and bonfire nights, but would insist upon locking them up in an iron chest. This was one grievance. Another was that he objected to allow her that excessive freedom of action which she had always been accustomed to. This she considered unkind; and as she could not plunge unfettered into all the gaieties of London, she thought she would indulge her maternal feelings by visiting her children —the Topham-Wells children, as we must call them for the sake of distinction—in the Wolds of Yorkshire. Though the unhappy Moor could hardly be expected to feel much interest in these tender beings, he consented to accompany her in this journey to the Wolds. "The incidents," says Desdemona, "that occurred in that short period are so numerous, I hope I shall be excused entering into the different minutiæ of them. If there be any comfort on this earth, it is to relate our griefs to a friend, which a generous public has ever been to me.

"We set out in an elegant vehicle, commonly called a one-horse chaise, without a servant; but my bosom beat with maternal feeling and hope,

while it presented their image, and wholly obliterated every sensation of timidity and every conscious blush for my humiliating appearance.

"Though wedded to a man whose wealth was estimated at nearly half a million—a man for whom I changed my religion, and with all the forms and solemnities of that which I adopted, in conformity to his will, because the received and accepted partner of his fortune—I was obliged to commence my journey without even the attendants which were necessary to my safety, and which my state of health at that period demanded.

"We lived for some time previous to our setting out in a small cottage near the Hyde, in Middlesex, in order to screen my illustrious husband from the penalty of a prosecution, which had been given against him for having assaulted a citizen. This cottage had been hired by a respectable lady, through friendship for me, and we resided with her under the denomination of lodgers. From thence I departed, accompanied by my husband. The irritability of his temper became evident before we had proceeded ten miles on our journey. The consciousness that he had none of his usual pompous attendants—no turbaned lacqueys to watch his eyes and tremble at his frown—rendered him so peevishly insupportable, that I began to anticipate the un-

pleasing circumstances which but too rapidly followed. I found him sullen, restless, impatient, and wavering in his determinations; for constancy was not one of his perfections.

"At the first inn where we stopped, his manner spread dismay through the bosoms of all those that witnessed it. The graces of his person were not visible in the European habits. This circumstance augmented his chagrin; and he did not recover any portion of his placidity till he sat cross-legged in all the magnificence of his Moorish paraphernalia. For this important metamorphosis his trunks were at every stage unpacked; and I had the supreme felicity of seeing my illustrious partner, once during every twelve hours, decked in the splendours of a second Othello. Even his Moorish habit did not tranquillise his mind; domestics were still wanting. He therefore informed me that he would proceed no farther, but return to town, and recommence his journey *like himself*. This promise did not exhilarate my hopes, or enliven my prospects; for to travel *like himself* afforded me no chance of credit or consolation.

"After much persuasion he consented to drop the *incognito*, and, by paying the penalty of his lawsuit, resume his native character. This thought delighted me; for it has ever been repugnant to my feelings to appear mean or degraded. Un-

happily, my gratification was the source of his instability. Again he changed his mind, and we proceeded in *demi*-pomp on this journey of disasters. My Moorish lord proposed driving the one-horsed car in all his Turkish magnificence; but as there would have been some difficulty in sitting cross-legged on the narrow seat, and as an idea might have suggested itself that he would have been mistaken for the renowned Flockton,* of puppet-show memory, the plan was not adopted. The forty pounds, likewise, preponderated in the scale of reflection; and he knew that he must pay the penalty of his lawsuit by an attempt to assert the *dignity* of his character.

"On we went, half the twenty-four hours in British simplicity, the other half in African grandeur. One hour I fancied myself the once-happy '*Cowslip*,' and the next I knew, to my inexpressible sorrow, that I was the wife of a Moorish *nobleman*. At the second inn where we rested, if rest may be supposed to have attended our progress, an unlucky tear, which maternal tenderness extracted from my heart, so ruffled the serenity of my noble spouse, that he instantly demanded to know the cause of its appearance. This tear did not long offend him,

* A man who carried a ridiculous puppet-show round the country. His people were dressed in Turkish habits.

for his tone of voice so startled me that it fell from my cheek and became invisible. But the memory of it did not so easily evaporate. He deemed it an insult to *his* ideas of wedded love to entertain the feelings of a mother; to be worthy of so *rich* a prize, he thought it necessary that I should abjure all the sensibilities of nature.

"He knew that my heart panted to embrace my children. He therefore kindly proposed remaining some time at a pleasant inn on our journey. Again his passion for parade suggested the idea of sending for his turbaned attendants, till I—rather *mal à propos* —reminded him, with all due respect, that he had humanely driven them from their post of dignity, and that they were at that moment selling rhubarb about the streets of the metropolis. Nor was the Moorish consequence a little degraded by their exhibiting the very liveries in which they had borne the Morocco standard when His Most Gracious Majesty went in state to St. Paul's Cathedral."

Desdemona's real or fancied troubles continued, according to her own statement, all the way to Stamford. A landlord, whom she calls an honest Boniface, handed her out of her carriage, at which the impetuous Moor was highly enraged; and when she seemed to be ill at an inn, and the hostess suggested that a doctor should be sent for, the

sable tyrant refused his consent, and ordered a chaise-and-four. As Desdemona elegantly puts it —"the car of wedded love, which Cupid had now abandoned, was to be led home, and the once-honoured reins consigned to plebeian hands."

The Moor went to sleep on the journey, which afforded Desdemona a temporary relief from her troubles; but when he woke up he accused her of robbing him. When he found that his strong box was safe, like one of the bad genii in the fairy tales, he asked his victim to sing, to amuse him, in her old professional style. She complied with the request, but complained of her audience. He next accused her of witchcraft, and said she had used some potent charm to win a heart of such inestimable value. At a village on the borders of Lincolnshire he inquired for a stage-coach to convey him back to London, while the deserted Desdemona—obstinately bent upon going on to drop a tear over her Topham children—accepted a place in the stage-coach, given her on credit by the landlord of the inn, as she was without money. "The vehicle," she says, "had no other passengers; therefore, with the Moor's concurrence, after tearing from my shoulders a shawl which he called his property, I was permitted to depart. The joy of escaping from this watchful lynx—whose eyes, like

those of the basilisk, never ceased to annoy me—is not to be described."

Her unprotected situation, and probably her levity, encouraged the coachman to patronise her in too friendly a manner; but she repulsed his offer of brandy-and-water by threatening him with the Moor's vengeance. "On my commanding him to proceed," she says, "he drove on six miles farther, frequently honouring me with a familiar knock at the window, with 'How are you now?' at the same time knowingly pressing his finger on his nose, and desiring me not to be unhappy."

After some little difficulties, which are made the most of in the memoir, she arrived at Stilton, driven by the same coachman, and found that the Moor had arrived by some other conveyance. The quarrel was made up, and they journeyed together from this point to Stamford, visiting some friends at Gretford on the way, where the Moor was induced to buy a horse, to travel handsomely with.

At Stamford the Moor hired lodgings, and said that he would send for Desdemona's mother and children. "I hinted," says the lady, "that he should send a draft to pay the expenses of their journey; but this unlucky proposition proved a new source of irritability. He refused to comply, and upbraided

me for the expenses already incurred on our adventurous journey.

"At Stamford the splendours of Moorish decoration were again exhibited. The whole town was roused to consternation. A *great prince*—a *grand Turk!*—supposed by some to be insane, by others considered as *only* ridiculous."

At a banquet given to many of Desdemona's friends in that part of the country, a young lady appeared, who strikingly resembled the eldest of the Topham-Wells children. The resemblance revived all the motherly feelings of Desdemona, and she tried to prevail upon the Moor to allow her to depart for Yorkshire immediately. Failing to gain his consent, she started clandestinely, to travel one hundred and thirty miles, with two guineas in her pocket. She had hardly proceeded one stage when her determination to fight the journey out on this sum broke down, and she wrote to the Moor for more money. She received no answer to this request, owing to the miscarriage of the letters, and her further progress was consequently attended by nearly all the mishaps which usually afflict people who travel without money. Her theatrical instinct, however, appears to have led her to seek the right people, and, like Romeo, she was befriended by an

apothecary. After seeing the Topham children, and Major Topham also, for the matter of that, she returned to the Moor at Stamford. During her absence he had exhibited more Eastern magnificence, and had grown a little more jealous and excited.

"We met a poor shepherd," she says, "on our journey back to Stamford. The honest fellow bowed as he passed me. My husband called to him, and demanded, 'How long have you known my wife?' The shepherd, rather surprised at the question, hesitatingly, and with simple honesty, replied, 'About five years ago madam was on a visit here.' 'I'll sell her to you for twopence!' vociferated my husband. The shepherd looked aghast. My daughter burst into tears, and begged the groom to take her back to grandmamma. I now foresaw all that would happen; while the honest countryman wisely took advantage of the confusion, and bade us 'Good night!'"

They removed to London together, and the Moor seems to have pined after his native land. Desdemona's narrative still continues:

"As his father always intended that he should succeed him in his situation as premier to the emperor, he determined to go to Morocco and present himself at Court; and to make his visit the

more acceptable, he laid out large sums of money in presents, among the items of which there was twenty thousand pounds' worth of brass cannon. It had long been his darling theme that I should go with him, and in person supplicate the young emperor to receive him, as they had been boys together. The necessary forms to be observed on the occasion were regularly rehearsed at our house in Pall Mall, under the direction of my husband, and several Moors and Turks who attended for the purpose, himself always filling the imperial chair."

They went on board a vessel lying in the river, bound for Mogadore; but when Desdemona found that he had engaged the whole ship, her fears were excited, and she escaped in a boat. The Moor followed her to Pall Mall, where he appears to have acted Othello, to the extent of firing off a pistol over his wife's head in their bedchamber. Of course he was taken to Bow Street in the most prosaic manner, and bound over with two substantial sureties to keep the peace. Badgered and defeated on all sides, he fled to Denmark about the beginning of 1799; and his end, as recorded, is somewhat peculiar.

He settled down at Altona, where he built a large street at his own expense. For the last few years of his life his sole amusement was fishing,

though he broke through every rule of sport in following his hobby. He had a large room built, containing a reservoir of water that contained fish of different kinds. If these fish did not bite quick enough to suit his Moorish temper, the water was let off, and they and the attendants were soundly beaten with sticks. The reasons that he gave for deserting Desdemona were almost as eccentric as his conduct. "First," he said, "the ceremony was not a legal Jewish marriage; secondly, Mrs. Wells was not capable of becoming a Jewess, without which no marriage could take place; and thirdly, she broke the Sabbath and the holy feast by running away from me in a post-chaise, and eating *forbidden fruit*—namely *pork griskin* and rabbits."

THE GREAT M.C.

HEROES, martyrs, geniuses, philosophers, gladiators, members of Parliament, statesmen, admirals, circumnavigators, major-generals, lord mayors, bank directors, currency doctors, and all such great men, can always be found; but those little rulers of a little kingdom who have achieved an immortality by the tie of a cravat, the deportment of a body, or the regulation of a minuet, have been rare as comets in the firmament of history, from Petronius (Arbiter) down to the present hour. I am told that within the sacred precincts of the royal palace there is always an officer—with the usual number of deputies—whose duty it is to act as a guide to bewildered majesty in all the varied and endless ceremonials of state. This highly important functionary, whom they style the Lord Chamberlain, is entrusted with a power made up of trifles, superior

to that which is wielded by the whole Cabinet itself. He cannot declare war, nor can he make peace, but he can go a great way towards producing either of these states of national prosperity and adversity. His is the delicate task of regulating the relative social position of those diplomatic visitors who represent the wisdom, power, and influence of their respective sovereigns at the court of the British nation. He has to decide how often an ambassador of a particular state shall be invited to the royal dinner-table; he has to see that the rival Grand Dukes of Meddlingbeggar-Seidlitz and Meddlingbeggar-Freischütz have not the distinguished honour of visiting the palace on the same occasion. He has to see that the Minister Plenipotentiary from Lapland is provided with those little delicacies of the culinary art without which life and diplomacy would be a burden to him; and he has to arrange those temporary partnerships in the state quadrilles, where territorial importance dances with Norman nobility, rather than skill with skill, beauty with beauty, and elegance with grace. Such are but a few out of a multitude of real cares of state which weigh upon the mind of the Lord Chamberlain. What he is, he is by appointment, by family influence; and not by any divine right, any special aptitude, any self-creative power, or any extraordinary force of

will. Such a man is an artificial, not a natural production; sustained by his environments, and not rising superior to them; a lord chamberlain, in fact, who was made, but not born. Generations of such men may come and go; may heal diplomatic quarrels by their suavity of manner and knowledge of their art; or may foster new dissensions by a clumsy administration of their delicate office; but the outer world takes little heed of them and their doings, and they leave no mark in the written records of their time. Other men of obscure birth, of defective education, and of no very distinguished physical advantages, appear upon the fashionable horizon at distant intervals; create their own little kingdom by some mysterious power, higher, because more substantial in its manifestations, than genius; and govern it without deputy or delegated authority, according to their own individual and fastidious tastes.

Such men command a hearing, no matter what their different degrees of social influence may have been; and confessedly at their head stands Richard Nash, Esquire, commonly called Beau Nash, the King of Bath. Masaniello was a fisherman; Napoleon Bonaparte was a poor sous-lieutenant; Oliver Cromwell was a provincial brewer; and Richard Nash was born of poor but honest parents,

in the obscure town of Swansea, in Glamorganshire, on the 18th of October, 1674. His father was a minor partner in a glass-house, and his mother claimed some connection with gentility through her uncle, Colonel Poyer, who had the distinction of being killed by Oliver Cromwell for defending Pembroke Castle against the rebels. Some indications of future power must have shown themselves in the mind of young Nash, for his father strained his little income to give his son a superior education, and the boy was sent to Jesus College, Oxford, to prepare for the study of the law. Here the proverbial idleness of genius was soon made manifest, and the future King of Bath does not seem to have reaped any advantage from his university life, or to have left any trace of it, except a first and only affair of the heart with a young lady whose name has not been handed down for immortality. His tutors sent him home with much good advice for himself, and many instructions for his father.

The advice and the instructions seem to have been disregarded, for his next step in life was to enter the Army by purchasing a pair of colours. His military life, however, was very short, as he soon became disgusted with even the slack attendance and moderate duties required of him, and he entered his name as a student in the books of the Temple. His

studies, as might have been expected, were chiefly devoted to that second-rate luxury which was within his means; to dressing in an ostentatious style, that might have been judged tawdry by the canons of a severe taste; and to courting the bows and notice of that nobility whom he was afterwards destined to rule with a firm but becoming hand. Like all persons who have shone as distinguished members in that sphere to which the ambitious young Templar was now aspiring, he possessed the invaluable quality of a perfect self-assurance, disturbed by no nervous sensitiveness, or fear of becoming ridiculous. When he attempted a bow, he threw his whole intellect into the performance; marred it by no haste, by no want of respect for what he was doing, and concluded it with the calm consciousness that he had achieved perfection.

For some years Mr. Nash lounged away his leisure about town, gaining the acquaintance of many persons of fashion, birth, and fortune. In those days it was customary for the Inns of Court to entertain our monarchs with revels or pageants upon their accession to the Crown, and this ceremony being accorded—for the last time—to King William III., the choice fell upon Mr. Nash to conduct the whole with proper effect and decorum. The entertainment gave such general satisfaction, and brought out the peculiar abilities of Mr. Nash in such a manner, that the

Dutch monarch at once offered him the honour of knighthood. This Mr. Nash thought proper to decline, at the same time delicately hinting to Majesty that the offer would not be unacceptable if accompanied by a fortune. This suggestion His Majesty, being at the time rather pressed for finances, did not entertain, and young Mr. Nash was unrewarded in money-tribute for his taste and his pains.

The die was cast. As the first essay dropped into the editor's box, and proving successful, makes the future author; as the first applauded appearance upon the amateur theatrical boards produces the future tragedian or comedian; so the first triumphant discharge of the duties of a master of the Temple revels, made Mr. Nash a master of the ceremonies for life.

Besides his assurance, the future King of Bath had some virtues and some merit. If not brilliant, he was easy; his manners were always considered good, as they never relapsed into a state of rude familiarity; he was never seen in a dirty shirt; and though not strictly just to his creditors, he was very generous to persons in distress.

Two wagers are on authentic record which Mr. Nash was bold enough to win at this time: one of fifty guineas for standing with no other clothing but a blanket at the door of York Cathedral, as the congregation were coming out of church; the other,

a wager of a much larger sum, for riding in Lady Godiva fashion through a village on a cow.

These little eccentricities were thought nothing of at a time when young gallants drank wine strained through their mistresses' gowns, ate the shoes of the beloved ones tossed up in a fricassee, and swallowed tallow-candles instead of toasted cheese.

Mr. Nash was now thirty years old (1704 A.D.), without fortune, or any prospect of acquiring one. Up to this time he had led a life of expedients; but he now entered openly upon the profession of a gamester. The spirit of gaming, introduced in the time of Charles II., had thriven considerably, though it was confined in England to the metropolis. At the close of autumn every year, sharpers from all countries arrived for the winter, leaving again at the approach of summer for Aix-la-Chapelle, Spa, and the Hague. Bath, Tunbridge, Scarborough, and other places of the same kind, were then only the resort of such as went for relief of disease; their pleasures were rural, and the company was a mixture of broken-down splenetic London invalids, and hearty rustics in a state of rude health. People of fashion had no agreeable summer retreat; and when they reluctantly left the town, it was to spend their time with tenants, farmers, squires, parsons, and parsons' wives. The great want of that age

was a place where they might enjoy each other's company, and win each other's money, as they had done during the winter in town.

About the year 1703, when Queen Anne arrived there for her health, the city of Bath began to be frequented by people of distinction. The company was numerous enough to form a country-dance upon the bowling-green, to the music of a fiddle and a hautboy; and the amusements were varied with saunterings, in fine weather, in the grove, between two rows of sycamore-trees. Several learned physicians (Dr. Jordan and others) had even then borne testimony to the salubrity of the wells; and the public pleasures, in 1704, were put under the direction of Captain Webster, a notorious gamester, as master of the ceremonies.

The amusements, immediately before the advent of Mr. Nash, were not considered elegant, nor even delicate. General society amongst the fashionable classes was by no means established; the aristocracy were haughty, refusing to keep company with the gentry at any of the public entertainments; smoking was permitted in the rooms; and ladies and gentlemen appeared in a disrespectful manner at balls and assemblies—the former in aprons and the latter in boots. There were no regulations as to the time of meeting and departure, and when the company

liked each other—which was very seldom—they danced till morning.

The lodgings for visitors were paltry and expensive; the dining-rooms and other chambers were floored with boards coloured brown with soot and small-beer, to hide the dirt; the walls were covered with unpainted wainscot; and the furniture consisted only of a few oak chairs and a small looking-glass, with a fender and tongs. The city itself was mean and contemptible; there were no elegant buildings, no open streets, and no uniform squares. The Pump-house was without any director; and the chairmen permitted no ladies or gentlemen to walk home at night without insulting them. To add to all this, the whole place was threatened with ruin in its infancy, for one of the greatest physicians of the day, taking offence at some affronts he had received, had begun to write against the medical efficacy of the waters, in a published pamphlet, wherein he said "he would cast a toad into the spring."

It was at this moment that young Mr. Nash—the future King of Bath—made his quiet and unobtrusive entry into the unconscious city. He heard of the physician's threat, and at once seeing his advantage, he assured the people that if they would give him leave, he would charm away the poison of the doctor's toad with music. He was the right man, at the right

time, in the right place. He was joyfully empowered to set up a band of musicians; the company very sensibly increased; the new-comer triumphed, and Beau Nash was declared King of Bath by the unanimous voice of the visitors and people.

He had reached, at one fortunate bound, the extreme height of his ambition; and no one could say that he did not fill his exalted position with dignity and honour. He had no other hold upon his supporters than the ability with which he discharged his duties; and if many greater monarchs had only enjoyed their power by the same uncertain tenure, there would have been many shorter reigns to divide the chronicles of the historian.

Beau Nash had some wit, which he spread as much as possible; and when this failed him, he had plenty of vivacity at command. His town intercourse with people of fashion had taught him the characters of most of the nobility; and he was tolerably acquainted with many of their private intrigues. He numbered amongst his friends "Old Sarah," Duchess of Marlborough, who consulted him upon leases, bridges, canals, the well-known cascade in Blenheim Park, and the liveries of her footmen. He understood rank and precedence with the utmost exactness (here was the born lord chamberlain), and being fond of show and finery himself, he soon became a pattern of dress

for others. His habitual charity increased in his new position; and though constitutionally extravagant himself, he was fond of advising prodigal young men for their welfare. He was a good keeper of secrets; and humane to the foibles of people, when they were not present to defend themselves. Though he gamed high, he always played very fairly.

The first act of his beneficial reign was to promote a music subscription for a band of six performers, and for lighting and sweeping the rooms. The Pump-house was immediately put under the care of an officer, by the name of the Pumper, for which he paid the corporation an annual rent. A row of new houses was begun on the south side of the gravel-walks, before which a handsome pavement was made for the company to walk on. Not less than seventeen or eighteen hundred pounds were raised in one year (1705–6), by subscription, and laid out in repairing the roads near the city. The streets began to be better paved, cleaned, and lighted, and the licence of the chairmen was repressed. The company being still obliged to assemble in a booth, to drink tea and chocolate, or to game, Beau Nash undertook to remedy this inconvenience; and by his direction, one Thomas Harrison erected a handsome assembly-house for these purposes. A better band was procured, and the subscription was raised. Harrison had three guineas a

week for the room and candles; and the music, two guineas a man. The money Beau Nash received and accounted for with the utmost exactness and punctuality. Gardens were added to this assembly-house; and the beauty of the suburbs continued to increase, notwithstanding the opposition of the corporation, who at this time looked upon every useful improvement, particularly without the walls, as dangerous to the inhabitants within.

The power of Beau Nash was now secure; and to support it in a regal manner, he gave his subjects laws, which he drew up himself, and placed in the Pump-room. These laws do not exhibit Beau Nash to any advantage in a literary capacity; but it should be remembered that the letters and despatches of Oliver Cromwell were badly spelled, even for that time, and still worse put together. Beau Nash's laws, for all their defects of mere style, were suited to the people and the occasion; and, what is more, they were strictly observed, for they were administered by a man who was determined and impartial. Inspired by the character of his mission, he rose superior to all considerations of rank and station, and lectured a duke or a duchess upon any irregularity of dress or fashionable conduct with all the firm severity of John Knox when he preached against the vices of courts and palaces.

The balls, by his directions, were to open at six with a minuet, danced by two persons of the highest distinction present, and to continue until the clock struck eleven. Then the master of the ceremonies ordered the music to stop, by lifting up his finger; and after some time allowed for becoming cool, the ladies were handed to their chairs. Royalty itself had no power to alter these regulations of the King of Bath.

He was not less strict with regard to the rules and proprieties of dress. On one occasion, he stripped a white apron from a noble duchess, and threw it amongst the ladies' women on the hinder benches, declaring that none but *abigails* appeared in such an article of costume. He found more difficulty with the gentlemen in putting down duels and the use of the sword; but he succeeded at last, by having both the disputants arrested whenever he heard of a challenge. The country squires were by no means submissive to him in giving up their favourite boots, and he only carried his authority by the aid of a rather weak satirical song of his own composition, and a satirical sketch which was acted by a puppet-show.

The city of Bath, under this new and beneficial reign, now became the favourite theatre of amusements for all people of fashion. Upon a stranger's arrival, he was first welcomed by a peal of the Abbey

bells, and then by the voice and music of the city waits. For these civilities, the ringers generally received a present of half-a-guinea, and the waits of half-a-crown, or more, in proportion to the person's fortune, generosity, or love of show. These customs were generally liked, although the noise of the bells must have annoyed the sick; but the pleasure of knowing the name of every family that came to the town counterbalanced the inconvenience. Invalids are fond of news, and upon the first sound of the bells, everybody sent out to inquire for whom they rang.

After the family were thus welcomed to the city, it was the custom for its master to go to the public places, and subscribe two guineas at the assembly-houses towards the balls and music in the Pump-room, for which he was entitled to three tickets every ball-night. His next subscription was a crown, half-a-guinea, or a guinea, according to his rank and quality, for the liberty of walking in the private walks belonging to Simpson's Assembly-house; a crown or half-a-guinea was also given at the bookseller's, for which the gentleman was to have what books he pleased to read at his lodgings. At the coffee-house, another subscription was taken for pen, ink, and paper, for such letters as the subscriber might write at it during his stay. The ladies, too, might subscribe to the

bookseller's, and to a house by the Pump-room, for the advantage of reading the news, and for enjoying each other's conversation.

Things being thus adjusted, the amusements of the day were generally begun by bathing, which was no unpleasing method of passing away an hour or so.

The baths were five in number. On the south-west side of the Abbey church was the King's Bath, which was an oblong square, the walls being full of niches, and having steps at each corner to descend into it. This bath contained 427 tons of water, which, on its rising out of the ground over the springs, was sometimes too hot to be endured by the bathers. Adjoining the King's Bath there was another of more temperate warmth, called the Queen's Bath, which borrowed its water from the other. There were three other baths in the south-west part of the city—the Hot Bath, the Cross Bath, and one that was not so much frequented, called the Leper's Bath.

The hours for bathing were commonly between six and nine in the morning; and the baths were supplied with fresh water every day, the refuse being carried off by drains into the river Avon.

In the morning the lady was brought in a closed chair, dressed in her bathing-clothes; and being put into the water, the woman who attended presented her with a little floating dish, like a basin, into which the

lady put her handkerchief, a snuff-box, and a nose-gay. She then traversed the bath, if timid, with a guide; if otherwise, by herself, conversing in the water with any friends or acquaintances, male or female—for they all bathed together—and when she was satisfied with this part of the day's amusements, she called her chair, and returned to her lodgings. A general assembly at the Pump-house followed upon this, some meeting for pleasure, and some to drink the hot waters. Three glasses, at three different times, were the usual portion for every drinker, and the intervals between every glass were enlivened by the harmony of a small band of music. From the Pump-house the ladies withdrew, from time to time, to a female coffee-house, and from thence they returned to their lodgings, to take breakfast. The gentlemen withdrew to their coffee-houses, to read the papers, or converse on the news of the day, with a freedom and ease not to be found in the metropolis.

People of fashion sometimes gave public breakfasts at the assembly-houses, sometimes ordered private concerts, and sometimes attended very superficial lectures upon the arts and sciences. Concert breakfasts at the assembly-houses were also a common morning amusement; and titled amateur musicians, who could play upon any instrument, were

allowed to join the orchestra, and bewilder the professional performers. When noon approached, some went to church, some went to the parade and the public walks, some to the bookseller's, some to take exercise on horses or in coaches, some to the meadows round the town, and some to scale the romantic precipices that overhang the city. When the hour for dinner drew nigh, the company returned from their different recreations; and the provisions were generally served with the utmost elegance and plenty. After dinner came evening-prayers, and then the company met a second time at the Pump-house. After this they retired to the walks, and from thence to the assembly-houses to drink tea; the rest of the evening being occupied with balls, plays, or visits. The theatre was erected by subscription (1705 A.D.), by people of the highest rank, who permitted their arms to be engraven on the inside of the house.

Watching over all these titled loungers seeking for health and amusement, was the founder of modern English watering-places, the refined and elegant King of Bath. The magistrates of the city began to find him useful and necessary, and took every opportunity of acknowledging his royalty. His equipage was sumptuous as a lord mayor's carriage, and that is saying a great deal; and when he travelled to Tunbridge—which was a fashionable province

thrown off from Bath, and also under his government —he appeared in a post-chariot with six grays, and outriders, footmen, and French horns. His dress still preserved its early tawdry character, and he always wore a white hat. This state was not kept up by any money saved from the management of his monarchy, nor by any grants made to him by the people to whom he was so useful and indispensable. He lived upon his fair skill as a gamester in an age when gambling was considered one of the necessaries of (fashionable) life. Even at the gaming-table he conducted himself with propriety, not to say humanity; and when he found a novice in the hands of a sharper he always warned him of the danger. The games then in vogue were Gleek, Pimero, In and In, the Ace of Hearts, Pharaoh, Basset, and Hazard. After an Act passed in the twelfth year of William III., rendering these amusements unlawful, the games of Rolly-polly, Marlborough's Battles, and EO, were set up, and were largely supported by the very noblemen who had given their voices in aid of the amendment of the law. Tunbridge claims the merit of being the first place where the revival of gaming flourished; and here it was that the King of Bath was found defiling his royalty. All kings have, in their time, been guilty of crimes and mistakes, and Beau Nash was only mortal like the rest. Charles II. sold

Dunkirk for his own private ends; and the King of Bath entered into a secret partnership with two individuals for illegal gambling purposes. No records of business were kept; he was put off with small sums of money at different times, and defrauded at least of several thousands of guineas.

The next blot upon his career was the introduction of the EO tables into Bath, and another secret partnership with the keeper of the room. The success of the experiment was far greater than what could have been expected, though Beau Nash, as before, never reaped his stipulated share of the benefit. By a very decisive Act passed in 1745, all gaming was thoroughly put down, and the King of Bath having, as he had asserted, been defrauded by his associates of something like twenty thousand pounds, was weak enough to give publicity to his secret dealings by the institution of a Chancery suit. His legal proceedings failed, and from that time (1745 A.D.) his unexampled popularity was on the wane. Many enemies arose against him, and his time was occupied in continual disputes. He began to grow weak, decrepit, and garrulous—he was turned seventy—and his favourite mode of refuting slanders was by printed bills, composed in a confused, obscure, unintelligible style, which he used to thrust into the hands of every acquaintance whom he met. In his younger days

he was far from handsome; his person was clumsy, large, and awkward; his features were strong and peculiarly irregular; and in his old age he was positively ugly.

The most substantial monument of Beau Nash's generosity and humanity was the establishment of a hospital at Bath for the relief of poor people who came for the benefit of the waters. This asylum, though not built with his own private funds, was mainly created by his industry and influence. It was about this period, when he received snuff-boxes from the Prince of Orange and the principal nobility and gentry, when he held levees, and had his buffoons, flatterers, and even dedicators, that a full-length statue of him was placed by the corporation of Bath in Wiltshire's ball-room, between the busts of Newton and Pope. He was no great wit, even in his younger days; and as he grew old he grew insolent, though always prompt to check any exhibition of the same failing in others. If a lady refused to dance a minuet he would ask if she had got bandy-legs. He would ridicule natural defects, and was no longer the same gay, idle, thoughtless creature. He forgot how to supply new modes of entertainment; he had outlived the fashion as well as his general popularity. Happy is the beau whom the gods take young! He grew fretful and peevish, and, what is worse, he forgot the

deference due to birth and quality, and mistook the manner of settling rank and precedence. The once great mind was evidently giving way; the greatest of natural lord chamberlains was nothing but the wreck of his former self. It was about this time, when in comparative poverty, that he demanded the payment of an old and singular gambling debt. Playing on one occasion, many years before, with a noble earl who was madly fond of gaming, Beau Nash had the fortune to win the whole of his property, including his estate, and the very carriage at the door. When the nobleman was sufficiently punished for his weakness, the successful player handed back the whole of his winnings, merely stipulating that he should be paid five thousand pounds whenever he thought proper to make the demand. No such claim was ever made by Beau Nash during the life of the reformed earl; but when made, some time after his death, it was honourably paid by his heirs. This is something to balance—perhaps overbalance, considering the manners of the time—the gaming-table partnerships at Tunbridge and Bath.

The broken-down King was now abandoned by the great; and his only resource was to fall back upon those classes whom he had once affected to despise. His position, as master of the ceremonies, which he still retained, was sought after by many

people, who endeavoured to obtain it by blackening the character of the dying monarch. At the advanced age of eighty-six, exasperated by the neglect of those whom he had once assisted in their pleasures and their pains, and unconscious of his very inferior literary capacity, he formed the design of writing the history of his life. The task was never accomplished, nor even begun; and it was left for Oliver Goldsmith to perform, to order, in the Grub Street days, to whose anonymous book we are indebted for most of the facts contained in this sketch.

Shortly before the old King's death, which now rapidly approached, he received a pension of ten guineas from the Corporation of Bath, payable on the first Monday of every month. At last he died at his house in St. John's Court, Bath, on the 3rd of February, 1761, aged eighty-seven years, three months, and some days.

He was buried with considerable pomp, fifty pounds being immediately voted by the Corporation of Bath for the expenses of his funeral. He was followed by clergymen, aldermen, charity children, masters of assembly-rooms, the beadles of the hospital he had contributed so largely to endow, and, lastly, by the poor and grateful patients themselves. As one of the journals of the time expresses it, the crowd was so great, that not only were the streets filled, but

the tops of the houses were covered with spectators. The papers overflowed with hundreds of elegies upon his death, and with epitaphs, groans, and characters innumerable. He was said to be sagacious, *débonnaire*, and *commode;* to be indeed a man, and a constellation of the heavenly sphere. Venus, Cupid, and the Graces were commanded to weep; and Bath was told a thousand times that she would never find such another monarch.

Nearly a century has passed away, and the salubrious city has not found a successor to poor Beau Nash. Times have strangely altered since then. No Abbey bells ring merrily now to welcome the visitor; but he is ushered in by the grinding screech of the railway carriage, the piercing shriek of the railway whistle, and the rumble of the jolting railway omnibus, or the hired railway fly. Streets of low hovels have spread out in many directions; and the city is full of the life and bustle of a crowded native population. The small number of jaded invalids and fashionable loungers who still cling to the half-faded traditions of the place, have shrunk away in long, dismal gray stone avenues and squares, like a withered aristocracy of the past. The minuet, with all its stately glories, has gone with those who danced it; the measured airs of the last century are changed for the street-braying of a wild German waltz; the pack-

ages of the once despised bagman are found in the halls of the most exclusive hotels; and the old spa sees all the favours of patronage lavished upon forward rival chits that have neither dignity, history, nor age.

TWO LIVES.

THE child, Mr. Wordsworth, begging your pardon, is not always the father of the man; and in some cases it is as well, perhaps, for the happiness of society that it is so. There is some comfort in feeling that your marvellously clever boys are doomed to die at an early age—as far as their cleverness is concerned—and are re-born in the shape of ordinary, every-day beings. Infant prodigies, like comets, meteors, great novels, new schools of painting, new lines of acting, enormous gooseberries, pigs with two heads, daring horse-riders, talking fishes, remarkable tenors, sopranos, contraltos, and baritones, are dreadfully troublesome things in their way, and seem to stop the business of the world while they retain their notoriety.

It is well that calculating boys have sunk into

NOTE.—"Memoirs of Mr. W. H. W. Betty, the 'English Roscius.'" London: B. D. Cousins. No date. *Quære?* 1847–50.

respectable average engineers;—that the sons of "Professor" Risley have grown tall enough to toss their father;—that Mozart, the young four-year-old pianist, became Mr. Mozart, the composer;—and that Master Joachim, the youthful violinist, now stands before us as a full-grown German musician. When they retain their early talent, or even add to it, it is a blessed provision of Nature that they are compelled to grow. Nothing can prevent this; not even gin. As the hours come and go, and the inevitable months roll round, the miracle gradually becomes invisible to the naked eye. The wonder is lost sight of as it accumulates flesh. What is attractive at three feet high and six stone weight, is no longer attractive when the height and weight are doubled. The ordinary rules of arithmetic seem to be entirely reversed, and, by multiplying a given quantity by two, you lose the quality altogether. Shall I state the case more formally?

If a certain amount of talent exists in a body three feet high, what amount of talent will exist in a body six feet high? Answer: None.

On the other hand, if talent is allowed to increase in proportion as the size of its human receptacle diminishes, there ought to be much more talent to excite wonder where no body can be discovered. It is the custom to use the opera-glass pretty freely

when infant prodigies are on the stage; but what would be the delight of the audiences if it was necessary to employ microscopes?

I have been led into these reflections by taking up a memoir of an almost forgotten boy, who was born in 1791, and who died (though only professionally) in 1824. His vocation was that of an actor, and his name was William Henry West Betty. "This extraordinary individual," to adopt the words of his biographer, "whose name will be imperishable in dramatic annals, whose talents, at the early age of thirteen, gained for him the personal friendship of the nobility and *literati* of the United Kingdom—who obtained the appellation, in Ireland, of the 'Infant Roscius;' in Scotland, of the 'Young Roscius;' and, in England, at a later period of life, the proud designation of the 'English Roscius'—the companion of princes, our nobles, and statesmen," was born at Shrewsbury, on the 13th of September, 1791. His father was eminently respectable, and his mother "had a great predilection for the amusements of the theatre." She often recited poems and plays in private, and imparted her tastes to her son.

"Recitation," says the biographer, "is, indeed, a fascinating art; it improves the organs of speech, enables the possessor to express his thoughts with elegance and precision, expands the mind, and

elevates the soul. His (the boy's) uncle, Zachariah Betty, was surgeon and apothecary-general to the Duke of York, in Holland."

One day, the father of Master Betty, in reading 'Cardinal Wolsey's Lament upon his Fallen Greatness," happened to accompany it with some theatrical action. The miraculous boy observed this, asked what it meant, and was told. "What great events," observes the biographer, "flow from causes apparently trivial! From this moment, it seems, his destiny was determined."

He learnt to read—an important step gained —and was able to study his parts without hearing them uttered by others. He made himself perfect in "Douglas," and then performed the character on a sideboard.

By the time he had added Osman, in Voltaire's "Zara," Rollo, in "Pizarro," and Tobias, in the "Stranger," to his list, his parents became alarmed at the prospect of his going on the stage. His play-books were taken from him, and he was sent remorselessly to school. "Vain efforts," says his biographer, "to counteract the bias of a mind whose attachment to the drama was now too strong to be eradicated! The seed was sown whose prolific germ produced so rich and luxuriant a harvest."

There recitation was not enough to satisfy his

ambition, and he endeavoured to surround himself with the appliances of acting. "Sheets," says his biographer, very playfully, "were converted from being the quiet receptacle of those who courted the God of Sleep to assume a more active part in the drapery of his scenery."

In 1802 he was taken to the theatre to see Mrs. Siddons personate Elvira in "Pizarro." He was struck so forcibly by the dignity and impressive manner of the actress, that, on returning home, he learnt the whole of her speeches.

"All his ordinary amusements," observes his biographer, "became wearisome and trivial; the, theatre became 'his morning thought and midnight dream.' "I shall certainly die," he ardently exclaimed, "if I may not be a player."

At last his father introduced him to Mr. Atkins, the manager of the Belfast Theatre, before whom he rehearsed some passages from the part of Osman. The ultimate result of this interview was an engagement to perform at the theatre for several nights, and he made his *début* in 1803. The following is some portion of the bill :

THEATRE, BELFAST.

By Permission.

MR. ATKINS presents his respects to the Ladies and Gentlemen of Belfast and the Public, that, willing to bring forward every

novelty in his power, he has, through the intercession of several ladies, prevailed on the friends of a young gentleman, only eleven years old, whose theatrical abilities have been the wonder and admiration of all who have heard him, to perform in public two or three of the characters he most excels in.

On Friday evening, August 19th, 1803, will be presented, a greatly-admired Tragedy (never acted here), called

ZARA;

Written by that ingenious French author, Voltaire; and translated, with alterations, by A. HILL, author of "Alzira," "Merope," etc., etc.

Osman (*Sultan of Jerusalem*). . A YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

"The singularity of the exhibition," says the biographer, "drew a crowded audience, who were equally astonished and enraptured at Betty's performance. The applause was tumultuous, and the actors were confounded to see themselves so completely schooled by a mere child."

He next performed Douglas, Rollo, and Romeo, still at Belfast, and still at eleven years of age. His share in the receipts was one-half, after deducting twelve pounds each night for the expenses of the house. His parents seem to have altered their minds about allowing him to adopt the stage as a profession.

From Belfast he went to Dublin, where, in addition to Douglas, he performed Frederick, in "Lovers' Vows;" Romeo, Tancred, in Thomson's "Tancred" and "Sigismunda;" and Hamlet.

Dublin was anxious to retain such a youthful treasure (still only eleven years of age), but the elder Mr. Betty declined every offer. It does not appear that the young gentleman was precocious enough to manage his own business negotiations.

Cork was the next city to welcome him with open arms, and there he took the scalp of Octavian, in "The Mountaineers."

At Waterford he took more scalps—that of Don Carlos, in the farce of "Lovers' Quarrels," and Captain Flash, in "Miss in her Teens."

Londonderry, Glasgow, Edinburgh competed for the honour of his company, and he obliged them all in turn. "At Glasgow," says his biographer, "notwithstanding his immense success, Roscius" (the young gentleman) "was again assailed by a severe philippic; but the public indignation was so strongly excited against the assailant, that, being discovered, he was compelled to leave the city."

At Glasgow, he added Richard the Third to his list, and it may be interesting to know that Hamlet was under the patronage of Lady Douglass. This was in 1804, when, according to the playbills, the young gentleman was twelve years of age, and, according to the register, nearly thirteen. At Edinburgh, he took the scalps of Grumio, in "Katherine and Petruchio," and Selim, in "Barbarossa." It may

again be interesting to know, that during this range of performances, Douglas and Richard the Third were under the patronage of the Duchess of Buccleuch; Grumio, under the patronage of the Edinburgh and Leith troops; and Hamlet, under the patronage of the Countess of Loudoun.

From Edinburgh he went to Birmingham, still in 1804, "and the theatrical annals of that town," says his biographer, "furnish nothing equal to the commotion which his performance excited. The hotels and inns were completely occupied by persons who came to see him, from every part of the adjacent country; and even the now nearly defunct vehicles denominated stage-coaches, from places at a greater distance, were filled with passengers, whose only errand was to see the Young Roscius."

He next proceeded to Sheffield; where he met with the same success. "During his stay," says his biographer, "many families of distinction, from London, took lodgings at the hotels, etc., for the whole time he played; whilst carriages—labelled 'Theatrical Coach, to carry six inside, to see the Young Roscius'—were stationed at Doncaster Races to take passengers from the sports of the turf to the more rational amusements of the stage."

He next played at Liverpool for fourteen nights;

"and such," says his biographer, "was the unexampled pressure to procure places, that in the morning, when the box-office was opened, gentlemen frequently had their clothes torn to tatters, their hats and shoes carried away in the crowd, and themselves sometimes severely bruised and almost suffocated in the attempt. During the first twelve nights of his performance, the sum total of the house receipts amounted to upwards of £3,680. Master Betty, on an average, shared £90 a night; and, including his benefit, received the sum of £1,520."

While at this town, Prince William Frederick of Gloucester interested himself very much in the young gentleman's welfare. He sent for Mr. Betty, senior, and spoke to him about the beauties and advantages of a liberal education in youth.

Young as our miraculous boy was, he could not escape "testimonials," and the grateful Liverpool managers presented him with two silver cups—whether tea or wine cups is not recorded—on the 31st October, 1804.

From Liverpool he went to Chester, and from Chester to Manchester. At the latter place a ticket-lottery was established, so difficult was it to get a seat in the house. Here the young gentleman was obliged to receive another silver cup "testimonial."

From Manchester he went to Stockport, from

Stockport to Leicester, and from Leicester to London, where he was engaged at both of the national theatres.

"With the London public," says his biographer, "business and other amusements seemed to be *passé;* peace and war, parties and politics, were, for a time, unheeded and forgotten, and the papers and periodicals vied with each other in critiques upon his theatrical representations."

His first appearance was fixed at Covent Garden Theatre, Saturday, 1st December, 1804. The following is taken from one of the newspapers of the time:

"So early as ten o'clock on Saturday morning, many gentlemen began to parade the Piazzas and Bow-street, in order that they might be near the doors when the crowd should begin to assemble. Before one and two o'clock numbers had taken their stations near all the doors leading to the pit, boxes, and galleries; and long before the doors were opened they stretched out in long, thick, close-wedged, impenetrable columns to the extremity of the Piazzas, in Covent Garden, and quite across Bow-street. Peace-officers were provided inside the theatre, and a strong detachment of guards procured outside. The precautions that had been taken soon became necessary. In the crowd before the doors—long before they were opened—the heat and pressure became so intolerable that many persons fainted. The danger, at last, was so great that the soldiers appeared and cleared the crowd from without, and then, lining the entrance, permitted every one to retire, but no one to enter. As the numbers were so great, the doors were very properly

opened before the usual time. The rush was terrific. In the space of a few minutes the two galleries were filled, and so closely wedged that not one more could get admittance, and they seemed as one compact solid mass. The pit was two-thirds filled, not from the pit-doors and passages, but from the boxes. Gentlemen who knew there were no places untaken in the boxes, and who could not get up the pit avenues, paid for admission into the boxes, and poured from the front boxes into the pit in twenties and thirties at a time. Still, even after it was crammed, the gentlemen crowded the front boxes, and, being unable for want of room to descend into the pit, remained there. It was in vain that those who had taken them, perhaps, weeks before, attempted to get to their places. Some ladies, however, were suffered to occupy the front rows. The rush into the other boxes was great; but order was more easily preserved in them, for it was impossible to descend from them into the pit; those who had taken seats in the upper and side boxes got easy access to them. But the lobbies were as crammed almost as any other part of the house; and happy did those think themselves who could get a station at the small holes at the back of the boxes, or could procure a transient and occasional view of the stage as the box-doors were opened.

"The heat in every part of the house became excessive very soon after it was filled. In the pit many gentlemen fainted, and were dragged seemingly lifeless up into the boxes. The ladies, in one or two boxes, were employed almost the whole night in fanning the gentlemen who were beneath them in the pit. Frequently we heard screams from those who were overcome by the heat, but could neither get out nor obtain the slightest relief. Upwards of twenty gentlemen who had fainted were dragged up into the boxes; we observed several more raising their hands, as if in the act of supplication for mercy and pity. It was with satisfaction we observed but few females exposed to this distressing state in the pit; they were but

thirteen, and they fortunately were placed in situations, so near the proscenium, as to derive the full benefit of the air from the stage. This scene, it may well be supposed, occasioned great noise and confusion.

"At length Mr. C. Kemble appeared, to speak a well-written address; but it had not been sufficiently advertised, for, as soon as he appeared, he was received with a loud cry of '*Off, off!*' The belief in the house was, that he had come to make an apology for the non-appearance of the Young Roscius. They would not hear Mr. C. Kemble, and after some time he bowed and retired. The play then began: the actors, in the first scene, were desired to go off, and those who would not hear the address now began to vociferate for it. Mr. C. Kemble reappeared, but silence was so little preserved, that, though he spoke the address, not a line of it could be heard in any part of the house.

"The play, then, was suffered to proceed; but of the first part of the first act little could be heard. The audience seemed totally indifferent to every actor but the Young Roscius. Selim does not make his appearance till the middle of the second act.

"At length the object so long wished for made his appearance. He was received with a thunder of applause. He bowed with much respect; but his self-possession did not appear to be shaken. His countenance is extremely prepossessing; his eyes quick, intelligent, expressive, though small; his mouth pleasing; his figure well made, and rather taller than boys of thirteen usually are. If he felt any embarrassment when he entered, it vanished in a few moments. He was immediately the actor, attentive to the scene and engrossed with his part: almost his first speech was delivered with unusual energy, and drew down a thunder of applause. His introduction of himself to Othman, his trial of him, and his declaration that he was Selim's murderer, were given with the finest effect.

"The Prince of Wales sat in Lady Melbourne's box, where His Royal Highness remained an attentive observer of the astonishing performance of the Infant Roscius. In the scene where he discovers himself and points to the scar on his forehead, the Prince took the lead in the loud and reiterated bursts of applause which followed.

"Behind the scenes were many of the first personages, both for rank and learning, in the country. Besides the Lord Chief Baron, Lord Melville, Mr. Const the counsel, etc., there were all the theatrical judges of merit.

"Numerous groups of ladies of the first fashion were also content to stand, during the whole of the performance, in any hole or corner where they could get a glimpse.

"The young gentleman was introduced at Carlton House to George IV., then Prince of Wales. At Lady Percival's he acted, in French, Zaphna, in the tragedy of 'Mahomet,' before His late Majesty Charles X. of France."

The University of Cambridge proposed him as the subject of a prize medal,

"Quid noster Roscius egit?"

On Monday, 10th December, he appeared, for the first time, at Old Drury Lane Theatre, when the same excitement prevailed. Windows were broken, and the balustrades on both sides of the staircase leading to the boxes were entirely destroyed. He suffered from a slight indisposition on the 18th of December, and the inquiries after his health were so numerous that bulletins were issued. The receipts of the houses at Drury Lane, during his twenty-

eight nights, were £17,210; or an average of £614 a night!

From Drury Lane he made a triumphant tour through Wolverhampton, Worcester, Stourbridge, Preston, Lancaster, York, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Sunderland, North and South Shields, Berwick, Whitehaven, and the towns where he had appeared before, realising in the space of four months about £6,000!

On his return to London an opposition had been formed against him to hiss him from the stage, but he triumphed over it and was more popular than ever. His terms were fifty guineas a night.

Amongst his particular admirers were Messrs. Pitt and Fox, the well-known statesmen, "by whom," says his biographer, "he was honoured with the most familiar intercourse."

Upon one occasion the House of Commons adjourned, by the desire of Mr. Pitt, to witness the young gentleman's performance of Hamlet!

At this period (1805–6) he was fourteen years of age, and at the highest point of his popularity. In 1806–7–8 he still performed at many places in the provinces, retiring for a time, until 1812, in which year he reappeared at Covent Garden Theatre. His success, though not much enlarged upon by his biographer, must have been very marvellous, con-

sidering that he had attained his full-grown majority. The greatest difficulty he had to get over, must have been his own reputation as a miraculous boy, and it is something to find that if he was not able to excite enthusiasm, he still acquired respect. He kept an interrupted and not very vigorous hold of the London and provincial stage until 1824, in which year he died very sensibly (though only professionally, at Southampton, as the Earl of Warwick), aged thirty-two. The metamorphosis had taken place. The miraculous boy had passed into the respectable common-place man. The two lives were as totally distinct from each other, as if they had been ordained to work themselves out in separate bodies. The last may still look back with dreamy wonder at the first, and the share it took as a practical satirist of the British stage.

A CONVERTED THEATRE.

THE Grecian Theatre having fallen into the hands of a body of people on the most familiar terms with the Deity, who claim to be the chosen agents for the supply of unadulterated Christianity, it may not be amiss if a dealer in public amusements like myself should put on record a short history of the place, drawn chiefly from personal recollections. The Grecian, before it became a theatre, was one of the earliest music-halls in London properly so-called, as distinguished from the old tavern "free and easy"—the public-house with the long room where "harmonic meetings" were held, and where the visitors were invited to contribute to the harmony (or discord) of the evening. The Grecian, then called the "Eagle," like many more places in suburbs of London, was a small building standing in a garden, like the summer theatres at Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and other cities, where fireworks, variegated lamps,

performances on the slack wire, and other harmless attractions are added to music and the drama in the midsummer evenings. The Red Cow at Dalston, the Rosemary Branch and Britannia at Hoxton, the Globe, and the property now known as "Lusby's" in the Mile End Road, White Conduit House at Pentonville, the Yorkshire Stingo in the New Road, and other places at Walworth and other suburbs, were, like the Eagle, the imitators on a small scale of Vauxhall Gardens—the legitimate successor of the once famous Ranelagh and Marylebone. In those days the dispensation of music and dancing licences was more liberal than it is at present, and the brutal Act of 25th Geo. II., cap. 36, was not looked upon as a legal instrument for the destruction of public amusement. The 6 & 7 Vict. cap. 68 not having been passed, the inducement to raise fancy prosecutions as to what is and what is not an illegal performance of a stage-play did not exist; and as long as the managers steered clear of Shakespeare and the legitimate drama, and kept to taste and the musical glasses, they were not molested. When they broke this rule they suffered. I remember, as a child, seeing a motley procession in the hands of the police at Shoreditch, marching, or rather being marched, to the Worship Street Police Court. The procession consisted of the performers in costume, the band, the

money-takers, and a portion of the audience, who were accused of enacting and witnessing a play called "Othello," written by one William Shakespeare, and doing this in defiance of the monopolist rights of the patent houses, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, who probably at that time were thriving on performing elephants and the rope-walker, Madame Saqui. This infamous monopolist law has long since been repealed; but it should never be forgotten that managers—notably one at the Garrick—suffered six months' imprisonment with hard labour for breaking this diabolical Act of an English Legislature.

In all professions there are men a little in advance of their time, who act as leaders, and the proprietor of the Eagle was one of these. Mr. Thomas Rouse was largely endowed with taste and a love for the musical glasses. His place was essentially a music-hall, but he soon turned it into what was called a Saloon Theatre—the best of its kind. There were others in London—the Bower, at Lambeth; the Effingham, at Whitechapel; the Britannia, at Hoxton; the Albert Saloon, etc.—but the Eagle led the way. Madame Vestris at the Olympic was gaining credit for the improvement of stage decoration and furniture, and Mr. Rouse was equally entitled to the same credit at Hoxton. Whatever he did he did well. He put light operas on the stage,

selected from the *répertoire* of the French Opéra Comique. The "Crown Diamonds," the "Domino Noir," and many others were represented by a competent company, prominent amongst whom was a Mr. Fraser, an excellent tenor from Covent Garden. Mr. Rouse's band and chorus were more than passable, and his ballet were well selected and well drilled —the principal dancer being a graceful young lady, then and now known as Miss Carlotta Leclercq. Dancing was well cultivated at Hoxton. The neighbouring Britannia, during a dismal period, when for some reason it had lost its music licence, was rich in the possession of Mr. Flexmore, a dancer and pantomimist who has had few equals, and who went at one bound from Hoxton to the Italian Opera in the Haymarket. This was just before the days when the present much-respected Mrs. Lane appeared upon the scene as a charming burlesque actress and singer, under the name of Miss Wilton.

The Eagle was not only directed, but watched by Mr. Rouse. Every night he sat in a prominent private box with a large stick to keep order. This was occupying something of the position of a chairman at an harmonic meeting; but Mr. Rouse thought it necessary. The audience knew him, and liked him, but never dared to be too familiar with him.

He looked what he was, the representative of

stern authority. The cant saying of "Bravo Rouse," once popular over the whole of London, was the only liberty ever taken with his name. The saying probably originated in a burst of admiration for something he had placed upon the stage with more success than usual. He was never called Tom Rouse except by a few intimate friends, prominent amongst whom was "Dodd the Dustman." Mr. Dodd was the actual founder of the Royal Dramatic College, and as a reward for this work he was caricatured by Charles Dickens as "Mr. Boffin."

An important period in the history of the Eagle now arrived. Mr. Rouse wanted a new low comedian. His principal male dancer—the late Mr. J. Milano—knew of the want, and undertook to supply it. Mr. Milano had a small department under his charge, in which he had called in the assistance of a young male friend, who had already appeared upon the provincial stage, but was then out of an engagement, and glad of any employment. This friend Mr. Milano induced Mr. Rouse to try, and he was put on in a little Anglo-French farce of no pretension. He gave satisfaction, and in a few weeks he was an established favourite. This was Frederick Robson. For several years he played here in a round of his best farcical characters, and did good service also in the various operas. His Boots at the Swan, his Wormwood in the "Lottery

Ticket," etc., were as good then as they ever were when he transferred them to the Olympic, and his tragi-comic style was the delight of sixpenny audiences long before he became the idol of Western London. The Eagle at this time was a music-hall in every essential feature. The seats had ledges in front of them to hold tumblers, and the audience smoked and drank as they sat and witnessed the entertainment. After the theatre was over, a short music-hall concert was held in the saloon in the grounds, and here the great little genius again delighted his admirers with the comic songs which afterwards helped to make him famous. His small dapper figure, surmounted by a large, boyish head, would have served him badly in parts requiring dignity and presence, but in parts of intense passion and pathos, with a power of dropping suddenly into the most humorous low comedy, the English stage has probably never seen his equal.

Before Robson's departure the Eagle became a regular theatre under the new powers and regulations of the Lord Chamberlain, and the smoking and drinking were banished to the grounds and bars. Some little time after his departure to the Olympic, where he lived, created a great reputation, and died, the Eagle was transferred to Mr. Conquest, once the proprietor of the Garrick. Mr. Conquest's son George, by his remarkable pantomimes, kept the

place far above the level of a minor or even a local theatre, and on the death of his father he took charge of the whole property. After a time—about two or three years ago—he sold it to Mr. Clark, and Mr. Clark only the other day transferred it to the Salvation Army. To judge by certain hymns and articles published in the *War Cry*, the days of tragi-comedy at the Eagle are far from ended, though some of the songs or hymns would not exactly meet with the approval of the Lord Chamberlain. General Booth, however, is a privileged person, and allowed to burlesque religion without a dramatic or music-hall licence, under the immediate patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

THE MAHOGANY MINSTRELS.

He was one of those old-fashioned penniless managers, doomed to manage a mouldy theatre in a sluggish country town, where all "professionals," so-called, were held to be only worthy of the stocks. He had tried everything within his humble means, and had failed in most things. He had tinkered his rotten stage—rather badly; he had painted his own scenery—even more badly; he had been his own orchestra, his own bill-sticker, his own gasman, his own leading actor, and had even sung comic songs at one or two "free-and-easies" in the town to give his frequent annual benefits a much-needed fillip. He was sober, if not clever, industrious and scheming, economical he was bound to be, and good-tempered under trials that would have made a demon of the well-fed rector. Once upon a time he possessed some lofty artistic aspirations—some

dreams of fame and distinction, of a lesseeship of a leading London theatre and a successful appearance before a metropolitan audience in a comedy or tragedy of his own writing. These visionary hopes were at last dispelled by the hard and profitless drudgery of his daily life and the necessity of providing a numerous family with bread and butter. His company were sorely tried at times, and in return they sorely tried him. The night came at last when they fairly struck, and left him and the sluggish town without the refining influences of the drama.

It often happens that things mend when they come to the worst, because those who govern things develop unexpected inventiveness and energy. This was the case with our broken-down manager. To use a vulgar but expressive phrase, he pulled himself together. He borrowed a copy of a theatrical paper commonly called the "Showman's Bible," and he searched the advertisements. Amongst many tempting announcements, he saw one which seemed to suit him. A company called the "MAHOGANY MINSTRELS," twenty-four in number, were in the market at the absurdly low sum of ten pounds a week, with a "varied, pleasing, and thoroughly genteel *répertoire* of burlesque, drama, and pantomime, and an INTER-MEZZO of popular songs and dances

(see advertisement), warranted not to offend the most fastidious, and particularly adapted for the edification of schools and families." He lost no time in communicating with this model company. If he had had a shilling to spare he would have sent a telegram, but he found a penny more within his means. The model company's manager arrived in a couple of days, and described more fully the merits of his company. "We have been together," he said, "for nearly five years, and have never had a single disagreement. My leading lady is a perfect angel. She never complains of her dresses or her dressing-rooms. She never grumbles about her part, or sulks if another member of the company has got more words, or more 'business.' She is quite ready to play in four pieces a night if you wish it, and equally pleased if you tell her you do not require her at all. My leading gentleman is just as amiable. He has no vanity, and probably no ambition; and, what is more to the purpose, he was never known to drink. My low comedian is gentle and refined, and speaks the words given to him, and nothing more. My minor actors are quite as well behaved as the principals; they never spoil their dresses with beer-stains or fried fish, are never late at rehearsal, never noisy, and never miss a performance. When a new piece is being read, it is a pleasure to see them—both

principals and company. They are silent, it is true, but it is not the silence of individual selfishness. They do not sit like the party in a parlour, described by Charles Lamb, 'all silent and all damned.' Their expression is always one of respectful attention. When Saturday comes, or whatever day may be fixed for the payment of salaries, they have one peculiarity which I believe is not shared by any other members of the profession—they never ask for payment." "What!" exclaimed the penniless manager, "do you mean to tell me that such a company exists, except in imagination?" "I do," responded the former speaker, "and in a box at your railway station. They are marionettes, and that is why I call them 'The Mahogany Minstrels.'"

DRAMATIC CRITICS CRITICISED.

DRAMATIC criticism is one of those arts that have no recognised position and no recognised principles, but plenty of too easily recognised professors. They swarm into every theatre, and are as well known as the actors or the boxkeepers. They pretend that the power of preserving the anonymous would materially add to their independence of judgment; but neither they nor their employers take the slightest trouble to secure this privacy. A few beggarly pounds or shillings are allowed to stand between the critic and that which he says would aid him in doing his duty to the public. The "free-list," suspended at times, as far as regards bonnet-builders,

NOTE.—This article was first published in 1867, before I became a theatrical manager, and while I was still a journalist. It is republished because it caused much discussion and misrepresentation.

dock officials, linendrapers' assistants, publicans, and that very large parish of individuals who come under the general description of "professionals," is never suspended, as far as the public press is concerned. Anything that bears the shape and impress of a newspaper order, any ragged reporter or printing-office labourer who represents, or is supposed to represent, a newspaper, however obscure, is admitted to all theatres and places of public amusement at all times and all seasons. A dead newspaper is treated with more respect and fear than a live public. There is no written contract in dealings of this sort, but there is an implied understanding. The manager, by these courtesies, hopes to conciliate the paper, and in some cases does conciliate it, while the critic feels the influence of transactions entirely beyond his control. He is kind and gentle to the manager, whatever he may feel it his duty to be to the actors and authors. The manager is always spirited and enterprising. He is spirited and enterprising when he accepts a thoroughly bad piece and decorates it with splendid scenery, and he can only be spirited and enterprising when he has the judgment to select a good piece on which to lavish his capital. The worst of always pitching the key-note of praise too high, is that it makes it difficult to increase the tone when required. A manager is entitled to praise if

he produces a good drama, and deserves strong blame if he produces a bad one. It is a lame excuse for him to urge, or have urged for him, that he engaged the reputed best author in the market at a fair market-price, and "left it to him." This is not the act of a manager, but of a fool; of a man whose greatest successes must necessarily be "flukes." It is true that most so-called managers are men of this stamp, who hold scarce properties at the sides of our principal London thoroughfares, and whose whole art of management is to wait for "something to turn up." The critics, most of them, know this, but they never say it. When they want to abuse anybody, they scold the supernumeraries. The supernumeraries expect it, and the public, reading the reproof, think their arbiters of taste are faithful. Poor, meek, patient, stupid public, they are easily imposed upon! They see a close column of type, and think they are well served; the managers see it also, and are satisfied. In nine cases out of ten it is nothing but a wordy narrative of the plot of the play—a well-known device of critics when they wish to conceal their thoughts.

There is a very prevalent notion, fostered by many journals which abuse the tone and style of contemporary dramatic criticism, that nearly all the critics on the metropolitan press are playwrights,

whose want of independence is mainly due to the dealings they have with managers. This is a mistake, and, more, it is an injustice. With two or three exceptions, our dramatic critics are men who never write plays for the stage, or for the pigeon-holes of a manager's desk. They enter into no competition with the authors they are called upon to criticise; and if their judgment is biassed in any way, it is by personal more than by pecuniary influences. Mr. Dunphie, the dramatic critic of the *Morning Post*, is not a playwright, and Mr. Desmond Ryan, who represents the *Standard* and *Herald*, and is a musical as well as a dramatic critic, never wrote a drama or an operetta. Mr. E. L. Blanchard, of the *Daily Telegraph*, supplies pantomimes very regularly to Drury Lane Theatre, but does no other dramatic work. Mr. F. G. Tomlins, who represents the *Morning Advertiser*, wrote a tragedy called *Garcia; or, the Noble Error*, many years ago, but has never repeated the error; and Mr. J. Hollingshead, who writes the dramatic notices for the *Daily News*, is the author of one farce produced in 1858, and has never written another. The *Pall Mall Gazette* is represented by Mr. G. H. Lewes, and the *Globe* by Dr. Granville, both unconnected with stage writing. The principal critics on the London daily press who are active dramatic authors are Mr. John

Oxenford, of *The Times*, and Mr. Leicester Buckingham, of the *Morning Star*. Mr. Oxenford is an accomplished author and adapter, whose writings would be accepted and paid for at the market-price, even if he had no connection with *The Times;* and Mr. Buckingham's connection with the *Star* can have very little effect upon managers.* As one of Mr. Webster's chief toadies, he probably secured early attention for his translations, and the way in which he made the democratic free-trade organ play a few weak protectionist tunes when the Music Hall *v.* Theatres controversy was in its infancy, was worthy of some little reward. The *Star* has since wisely discovered that it cannot safely be Conservative when even the *Morning Herald* is Liberal on this subject.

The weekly papers are represented by writers who have quite as little to do with stage business. The *Examiner* critic is Mr. Henry Morley, who reads plays, but never writes them. The *Dispatch* is represented by Mr. Bayle Bernard, a conscientious and retired dramatist. The *Weekly Times* notices are written by Mr. F. G. Tomlins. Mr. Sidney Blanchard represents *Lloyd's*. The *Athenæum* and the *Illustrated London News* both obtain their dramatic

* This was written and published before Mr. Buckingham's death.

criticisms from Mr. J. A. Heraud, a mystic dramatist, who obtains a footing occasionally at the minor theatres. The *Saturday Review* obtains its dramatic matter from Mr. John Oxenford. The *Spectator* theatrical notices are very rare, except when Miss Kate Terry is acting. The *Illustrated Times* is represented by Mr. W. S. Gilbert, a young burlesque writer. The *Era* and the *Sunday Times*, both professedly theatrical papers, and bound to praise everything, may be left out of the catalogue. The *Observer* is represented by a gentleman of taste, who is not a dramatic author, but simply an old playgoer. The sporting papers may be passed by; and the religious papers never meddle with anything so abandoned as public amusements.

Out of this long list of newspapers, daily and weekly, only three are represented by active dramatic authors, and only six, including those three, by dramatic authors passive and active—a sufficient answer to those who assert that the hope of selling pieces, mostly translations from the French, at fancy prices, is the chief cause of newspaper critical mildness. Dramatic authors, far from being gentle judges of the work of their fellow-craftsmen, are often remarkable for Draconian severity. Mr. Tom Taylor is the most prolific modern dramatist, with the exception of Mr. Boucicault, and when he gets an

opportunity of passing judgment upon a contemporary drama, he is far from being merciful. His criticisms in the now defunct *Reader* were full of spleen and indignation, and his notices in *The Times* (during the illness of Mr. Oxenford) of "A Wild Goose," at the Haymarket, and of the defects of stage-management at the Adelphi, when his own drama of "Henry Dunbar" was revived, were like galvanic shocks to the readers of the leading journal. The public, used to nothing but critical sugar, were not prepared for this sudden dose of bitters, and the change of diet was evidently a mystery to the uninitiated.

All the writers named above have their individual peculiarities apart from the system of criticism they are supposed to uphold. Mr. Oxenford is a graceful and scholarly writer, never eager to use the admitted power of his journal to crush an actor or an author. Having written for the same paper for nearly thirty years, and being a sensible, observant, and cautious, not to say timid, man, it is almost unnecessary to remark that he is thoroughly imbued with the spirit of *The Times* newspaper. On the first night of a new drama he is not so anxious to ascertain whether the play is bad or good, when judged by a high literary standard, as to see whether it is accepted by the public, and has the chance of becoming

popular. If it will "run" a hundred nights, it is quite good enough for *The Times*, and the analytical criticism is reserved for the pages of the *Saturday Review*.

Mr. Dunphie's criticisms in the *Morning Post* are the work of a thoughtful reading man, whose natural amiability is often sorely tried by the rubbish he is compelled to witness. Mr. F. G. Tomlins is one of the most accomplished Shaksperian scholars on the London press, and one of the most genial humorists. If his dramatic notices in the *Morning Advertiser* do not more frequently show traces of fun and culture, it is because they have to be written hurriedly very late at night, or because the dramas produced seldom justify any writing beyond the merest reporting. Mr. Desmond Ryan, the dramatic critic of the *Standard* and *Herald*, is a writer of great experience with no very strong opinions, except in conversation; and Mr. E. L. Blanchard, of the *Daily Telegraph*, is a writer of equal experience, who represents a journal of enormous circulation, and is careful not to use his power recklessly. Mr. Leicester Buckingham, who represents the *Star*, is very fond of long words, and rings the changes on "emotional facial" and "facial emotional," until he confuses himself and his readers. He can write an able criticism when he likes, but his prevailing faults are a weakness for

praising everything in petticoats that is good-looking, and a passion for scolding that is almost feminine. Mr. G. H. Lewes, once well known as a clever dramatic adapter under the name of "Slingsby Laurence," writes occasionally in the *Pall Mall Gazette* with sense and critical power, but with too great an affectation of superiority to all other critics.

These are the chief critics of the London daily press, and it is their misfortune to work at a time when the drama is not much respected by intellectual people. Some editors who have very lofty notions of the place they occupy amongst the governing powers of the world, affect to speak of actors as "those people," and pretend not to care much how their dramatic reporting is done as long as they are not troubled with complaints and corrections. The critics who are blessed with such mighty editors, of course, are encouraged in that lazy habit which puts off a notice until the next day or the next, and as far as the drama is concerned, turns an otherwise well-conducted daily newspaper into a weekly or retrospective review. A critic who is not able to write his notices on the first nights of new dramas, is evidently not strong enough for the place, and ought to resign in favour of more robust, if less clever men. The readers of a daily newspaper look to their journal first for news, and secondly for style. The

critic who can leave a theatre at midnight, rush to his office, and give a clear and amusing account, one column in length, of a new three or four-act drama, tracing it to its source, apportioning praise and blame with an unprejudiced pen, and, above all, spelling the names of the actors correctly, is a treasure to his journal, and the proper critic for a daily newspaper.

All hair-splitting, and the Anglo-German style of criticism may be left to the weekly newspapers. Editors who know what a daily journal ought to be, will support a critic who never shuffles out of his work with the following paragraph:—"The play did not conclude until a very late hour, and we consequently reserve our remarks for a future number." It would be difficult to believe that such confessions of incapacity could creep into a well-conducted journal, if other similar confessions of failure were not frequently observable. On the nights of a heavy debate, or some equally expected event, we often see the following humiliating sentence:—"In consequence of the great pressure on our space, we are compelled to omit our law report, and many articles of intelligence." A manager of a paper who puts such a paragraph into type may well say that he is compelled to dispense with intelligence. In plain English, he tells the public that his machinery, his writers, his printers, and his management, have

utterly broken down, but hope to resume their labours in the course of a day or two!

A dramatic critic is the servant of the public—a taster sent in advance to try to report upon theatrical productions, upholding what are vaguely called the interests of art to the best of his ability. It is not every manager, however, who regards the critic in this light. Some managers look upon him as their servant, and not the public's. They resent any uncomplimentary remarks upon their dramas and their companies as personal insults, forgetting that a critic is in the same position as a judge. A manager may have friendly relations with a magistrate without expecting him to misinterpret the law in exchange for dinners and other civilities; but I am afraid that critics are regarded as more purchasable material. Some managers have the human weakness not to mind any abuse lavished on their actors and authors, even to the injury of their pockets; but then such managers are actors and authors themselves. A manager will accept a fortune made for him by an author or an actor; but he will not conceal his contempt for his benefactor if he feels it. The anxiety of an actor to influence theatrical notices is more pardonable. He has often a just ground of complaint in the character of the criticisms. A critic generally seems to think that his opinion overrides

everything. He has only to assert that a piece or an actor is bad, and the piece or the actor must be so accepted. He gives no reason for the faith that is in him. He has said it, and you must bow down and worship the unsupported opinion. There is no court of appeal, and if you write to the journal, you only get another snubbing.

Critics are human like other people, and have their likes and dislikes, their whims and prejudices. One man hates Shakspere on the stage, and has the courage to say so; another man hates slip-slop French translations; another man hates the public for their coarse and idiotic tastes; one man detests burlesque, with all its attendant glitter and folly; another man hates realistic effects, real cabs, real pumps, and real water; one man admires the old school of acting—the Turveydrop and deportment school; another likes the new and more flippant school; one man admires beautiful scenery and stage upholstery; another likes the pauper simplicity of more "legitimate" managers;—but they all strive to do justice to authors and actors, because they all have an affection for authors and actors. If their criticisms are not generally more lofty in tone, the fault lies, in a great measure, with the public. What is the use of proving, according to all received canons of criticism, that a piece is bad, when theatres can be

filled by it for two or three hundred nights? If the public want a higher order of criticism, they have only to ask for it. If theatrical notices during the last few months have exhibited an unusual severity, the cause may be found in the revival of hissing as a stage corrective. Hissing is the respected parent of dramatic criticism.

MANFRED ON THE STAGE.

ACTORS, with all their timidity and tendency to run in well-cut grooves, occasionally startle the world with the boldest ventures. Either in seeking after some ideal standard of excellence—some good trading novelty—or some vehicle for excessive personal display, they often make costly experiments on the public taste with most reckless courage. Such an experiment we must consider the production of Lord Byron's "Manfred," at Drury Lane, with Mr. Phelps in the chief, and we may say the only character, or abstraction. During this actor's management of Sadler's Wells, he was known to have favourable stage leanings towards Shelley's "Cenci;" and now, being engaged as a tragedian at Drury Lane, he selects for his reappearance on these boards an undramatic poem of the same period and school in which he can only act as the centre of a pantomime—the gloomy showman of a panorama.

Byron himself, in his published letters (and there is not much reason to doubt his sincerity), has recorded his opinion of the undramatic character of this poem very strongly. Writing from Venice, on Feb. 15, 1817, he gives an outline of "Manfred," and says: "You may perceive that I have no great opinion of this piece of fantasy; but I have at least rendered it quite impossible for the stage, for which my intercourse with Drury Lane has given me the greatest contempt." Again, on the third of March in the same year, he writes to Mr. Murray: "I sent you, the other day, in two covers, the first act of 'Manfred'—a drama as mad as Nat Lee's Bedlam tragedy, which was in twenty-five acts and some odd scenes; mine is but in three acts." It was called a "poem in dialogue," and it was avowedly written for the purpose of introducing some descriptions of Alpine scenery. On the 19th of March he writes again in the same strain: "The thing, you will see at a glance, could never be attempted or thought of for the stage—I much doubt if for publication even. It is too much in my old style; but I composed it actually with a horror of the stage, and with a view to render the thought of it impracticable, knowing the zeal of my friends that I should try that for which I have an invincible repugnance—viz., a representation." On the 9th of April he still returns to this

subject: "You may call it a 'poem,' for it is no drama, and I do not choose to have it called by so d——d a name—a 'poem in dialogue,' or pantomime, if you will, anything but a green-room synonyme." There are a few touches of Byronic affectation here, as there were in the indignant letter which he wrote when he heard that Mr. Elliston had dragged his historical tragedy, "Marino Faliero," on to the boards, but he probably had a feeling that his genius was not dramatic. To use a piece of critical slang his characters are nearly all subjective, not objective, "drawn out of his own head" rather than from observation of his fellow-creatures. "Marino Faliero," "Sardanapalus," "The Two Foscari," and "Werner," are all, as dramas, more or less stiff and pedantic—deficient in plot or character, but overflowing with declamatory speeches. "Werner" is the only play that really proved successful on its first representation. As, however, they deal with the world ("Marino Faliero" is founded on fact, and "Werner" is taken body and soul from a story by Harriet Lee in the "Canterbury Tales"), they have better acting qualities than the visionary plays, such as "Cain," "Heaven and Earth," and "Manfred." The latter, as one of its admirers (Lord Jeffrey) has said, "has neither plot, character, nor action." These are serious blemishes in any composition called a

"dramatic poem;" and far greater defects in a "stage play." There is too much of Manfred in the poem, and too much mystery about the cause of his gloom. We are not tempted to lift the veil, for fear of discovering one of those unpleasant secrets which not even the coarse vigour of the Elizabethan dramatists could render endurable. The half-disclosed relations between Manfred and his dead sister had better remain half-disclosed. They point to incest, if they point to anything. The struggles of his superhuman will—his constant protest against his creation—derive neither dignity nor force from a few disgusting innuendoes.

The poem of "Manfred" was produced in 1817—exactly at the half-way period of Lord Byron's brief and brilliant poetical life. It was his first attempt in the dramatic form, and was obviously influenced by a knowledge of Goethe's "Faust." Both poets had caught the spirit of the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, and the "Song of Solomon." In "Manfred," strangely enough, the weakest literary point is found in the songs of the spirits. The spirits are all terribly wooden, and their utterances have very little of the true lyrical ring about them. There is no lack of blue-fire, but some of the verses are very little above the level of good modern pantomime jingle. The strong point of the drama lies in its fine gloomy

soliloquies, but these have to be spoken in positions that are easily made ridiculous on the stage. They are tempting passages for stage elocutionists, but stage elocution is almost sure to vulgarise them. Their poetical value need not be insisted on here; it has been settled by two generations of readers, and by critics like Lord Jeffrey and Professor Wilson. There was a little too much in the analyses of these critics, which reminded us of clever critical dogs running after their own tails, but no encouragement was given to those who wished to drag "Manfred" to the green-room. Gifford, who was the "taster" mutually selected by Murray and Byron, never took kindly to any of the poet's dramas, and the third act of "Manfred" was entirely re-written at his request. Those who may think that Gifford's judgment was a little harsh and prosaic should read the feeble, spasmodic writing which Byron was induced to cancel.

The first introduction of "Manfred" to the stage took place at Covent Garden Theatre on the 29th of October, 1834, about ten years after the poet's death. Mr. Bunn was then the manager of this house, and he seems to have thought that much was to be gained by trading upon Lord Byron's fame. Mr. Dickens, and the vast school of literature of which he may fairly be considered the father, had

not then risen, and nothing was before the public to wean them from the worship of their old idols. In spite of this, however, it required some courage to appear as Manfred, and both Mr. Macready and Vandenhoff seem to have wanted this courage. Mr. Macready was first cast for the part; then, at a very short notice, it was given to Vandenhoff, and, finally, at a shorter notice still, it was handed over to Mr. Denvil, an actor from Exeter of some promise, who had made a respectable first appearance as Shylock at Drury Lane Theatre on the 6th of October, 1834. Mr. Denvil's style was somewhat exaggerated—belonging more properly to the melodramatic than the tragic school, and his impersonation of Manfred, therefore, though it obtained considerable popularity, was not a great performance. The piece was a compressed version of the poem, in two acts, with a termination in which the spirit of Astarte appeared and rescued Manfred from the fiends. Mr. Bishop (afterwards Sir Henry Bishop) composed and conducted the choral music; Mr. Warde played the Abbot; Mr. Cooper, the Chamois Hunter; and Miss Ellen Tree (now Mrs. Charles Kean), the Witch of the Alps. The piece "ran" for nearly two months, up to Christmas, 1834; and Mr. Denvil's portrait in the character was engraved in heavy mezzo-tinto—the fashionable style for portraits in those days. He

took the part with him as his "starring" property, and even appeared in it before rough, half-maritime audiences at the Pavilion Theatre in Whitechapel.

Those who have a belief that the drama and the art of stage management have improved rather than degenerated may be glad to know with what "effects" "Manfred" was really produced at Covent Garden. Of course much of the scenery by the Messrs. Grieve was excellent for the period, but the machinery and arrangements were hardly up to the low level of thirty years ago. Everything—even the comfort of the audience—was sacrificed to obtain stage effects which were hardly worth obtaining. The house was darkened almost as much as it is now during the performance of a patent ghost drama; and Mr. Denvil stalked about, uttering his soliloquies —his "soul musings"—like a lecturer exhibiting dissolving views. The "glaciers of the Upper Alps, borne down by a violent thunderstorm," were too obviously pasteboard crags, and they were overturned to that stage music which has been aptly compared to watchmen's rattles. Manfred stood on a ledge of rock about eight or ten feet high, which looked like a pulpit-desk in a haberdasher's shop, and from this mole-hill elevation, which he gained by a palpable staircase, he discoursed about the great gulfs below him. Here the scene with the Chamois Hunter was

reduced to an absurdity. Mr. Denvil was handed down the "inaccessible peak" so as not to disarrange his well-fitting silk stockings, and the Chamois Hunter slid down the little staircase in a sitting posture. The "white and sulphurous clouds" which boiled up from the "roused ocean of deep hell," were represented by a little steam that might have come from a laundry. The proportions of the crags and the perspective of the pictures were constantly being killed by the living figures. The cataract scene was rendered mean and contemptible by the presence of solid sturdy spirits, who bore evident traces in their persons of three meals a day, and extras; the rainbow, which appeared above the Witch of the Alps, was coarse, blotchy, and heavy, and the only thing tolerable was the pink light thrown on the dress of the young lady.

The revival of "Manfred" at Drury Lane—considered only as a scenic display—shows an immense advance upon the Covent Garden spectacle of 1834. It also shows how difficult it is for the most intelligent stage managers, assisted by all the improved mechanical appliances, to touch the poetical drama without soiling it. To use the words of Lord Byron in this play, "their embrace is fatal." The ideal school are always taunting the realistic school for keeping possession of the stage, forgetting that the stage is necessarily realistic. It never raised a

mortal to the skies, but it has brought a multitude of angels down. It takes a poem, and strives honestly to "illustrate" it; but, in so doing, it only assists the imagination of a few, while it falls short of the imagination of the many. It proceeds on the assumption that imagination is rare, and requires stimulating; whereas this quality of human nature is as common as the faculty of seeing. We need only point to the spread of superstition as a proof of this. The stage seizes a poem like "Manfred," and what does it—what can it do with it? It surrounds the chief character or abstraction with the grossest material forms, that are all dependent upon "cues," pulleys, scene-shifters, coloured fires, and creaking machinery. It turns the student's chamber into a vulgar conjuror's booth at a fair; it makes the most airy spirits pompous and self-sufficient—as windy in their utterances as professional "orators." It gives us a hell which flutters with gold-leaf—a model in gingerbread of one of Martin's—or rather, Day and Martin's—pictures. It calls up uneasy souls who are doomed to wear masquerade dresses and to dance in eternal ballets; and it tops the whole with a presiding demon who is a cross between a dragon and Punchinello.

These are not faults that are peculiar to one theatre and to one management; they are the faults of the stage, which can never be entirely eradicated.

When a realistic drama is produced we often have poetical scenery, but when a poetical drama is produced we nearly always have realistic scenery. The natural scenery in "Manfred," at Drury Lane, helps to prove this rule, for it is the most successful. The precipice and glaciers near the summit of the Jungfrau —painted and arranged by Mr. W. Telbin, assisted by his son—is a noble and beautiful picture. The appearance of vast height and distance is admirably conveyed, and the rich tints produced by the rising sun are brought out by a clever application of side-lights. The solid crags built up on the stage, from the top of which Manfred threatens to hurl himself before he is saved by the Chamois Hunter, were bold, rugged, and ample, and contrasted favourably with the contemptible scenery—before described—which rendered "Manfred" ridiculous in 1834. Mr. Denvil, who is still alive, and who is engaged by Messrs. Falconer and Chatterton, though not in a dramatic capacity, must have longed once more to attempt his old character with these happier surroundings.

The Steinbach waterfall is most elaborately arranged, and as much effect as possible is created without the use of real water, and the Hall of Arimanes, painted by Messrs. Danson and Sons—a copy of the Covent Garden scene—has a very impressive background. Mr. Telbin's front scenes are

also most artistic paintings—the terrace and exterior of Manfred's castle being a calm, beautiful picture. The last scene, taken from the Covent Garden play, and not from the poem—the destruction of Manfred's turret studio, disclosing a snowy Alpine waste with Astarte raised on high—was marred on Saturday by the clumsiness of the stage carpenters. The distribution of list slippers and mouth-gags for these very necessary but noisy workmen, and the application of a little grease to the machinery, will materially improve the representation. Though "Manfred" is a spectacle, the "words" are of some importance.

The music, by Sir Henry Bishop, wants spirit and fancy, and is a weak imitation of Mozart and Weber. Its execution will doubtless be much improved after a few more performances. The choir includes Miss Poole and Mr. Swift; and the increased orchestra is under the direction of Mr. John Barnard, whose song, "In the Blue Depths of the Waters," was very favourably received. The other musical addition is a solo and chorus—"The Captive Usurper" composed by Mr. Randegger.

Mr. Phelps's reading of "Manfred" was careful and appreciative, occasionally rising to the highest level of declamation; occasionally sinking into tricks of elocution. His voice, at times, seemed to suffer from weakness. The self-contemplative tone was

well preserved throughout, and his action was as easy as any man's could be who has to walk backwards and forwards for nearly two hours, like a captain pacing his quarter-deck. When he asks for self-oblivion, and the spirit answers that he may die, his rendering of the doubting line, "Will death bestow it on me?" was very fine. His description of the Chamois Hunter's simple life, his address to Astarte, and his scene with the Abbot, were all excellently delivered; but his scene with the Witch of the Alps—one of the finest in the poem—was made partly inaudible on Saturday by the squeaking of the cataract. He managed his incantations so as to save them from being absurd, which is the most we can expect, and he listened to Byronic doggerel like this:

> Bear what thou *borest*
> The heart and the form;
> And the aspect thou *worest*
> Redeem from the worm (warm),

with becoming belief and gravity. His reception, when the curtain rose, was one of the most stirring scenes we have ever witnessed in a theatre. Before he was scarcely seen standing in the dim twilight of the stage, the whole audience—wedged as they were from orchestra to gallery—raised one deafening shout, which lasted for several minutes. The occupants of

the pit and galleries struggled on to their legs and waved their handkerchiefs. The stamping of feet was like peals of thunder, and the more stiff and decorous visitors of the theatre caught and felt the enthusiasm. Many pilgrims from the great northern suburb, where Mr. Phelps has so long been known as an intelligent manager and actor, were doubtless in the house to welcome their favourite; and the applause was well earned by one who for many years has been a faithful and consistent servant of the public.

THE

WARDOUR STREET DRAMA.

IT is very hard to have to speak ill of one's grandfathers —to question their taste and to laugh at the idols which they tolerated and sometimes worshipped. Our grandfathers, however, provoke this want of respect by the tone which they or their admirers adopt when speaking about most of these idols. They constantly lecture us about the decay of our arts, and particularly about the decay of our national drama. They tell us in a manner which is sometimes very irritating, that we have had no national drama for the last fifty years. They trace this falling off to several causes, but chiefly to the flippancy and inferiority of the present age, and the partial destruction of an old theatrical monopoly. When the "patent" theatres were in existence; when all their actors were "His Majesty's

Servants," and all other actors were rogues and vagabonds; when it was illegal to "speak prose," and to perform anything much higher than pantomime, except on the privileged stage, the drama was supposed to be in a perfect and flourishing condition. Though the same complaints were occasionally heard then which are heard now about the lamentable dearth of originality in authors, these are now conveniently forgotten by the defenders of the past, and we hear of nothing but dramatic beauty, grace, force, harmony, judgment, and artistic feeling. The two great theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, hedged in with special privileges, which have happily disappeared though they have left us the sediment of a Lord Chamberlain, are referred to as schools where great actors were kept together for years, playing up to and round each other's talents and peculiarities in a way which has been killed by partial free trade and the starring system.

The fact that all this has been attained within the last ten years by two or three intelligent managers working with an intellectual as well as a trading purpose, is also conveniently forgotten; and while a few of our actors are grudgingly admitted to have a few merits, our drama is denounced as hopelessly decayed and degraded. While admitting that the two leading London theatres had very strong com-

panies fifty or sixty years ago, we may be pardoned for questioning whether these companies were always put to the best use; whether public taste was much purer then than it is now; and whether managers then were gifted with much greater judgment than their present successors. Legitimate and poetical dramas—the plays of Shakespeare—may have been more frequently in the bills, with strong casts, than they are at present; but they were mixed with a vast number of illegitimate dramas and electro-plated tragedies. Weak or stilted language, feeble or extravagant incidents, improbable plots, and Minerva Press sentiment, were the characteristics of most of these latter pieces; and yet they were popular. They were accepted by the best managers, distributed amongst the best actors, and presented to the best audiences. If we see one of them now performed in the country, or at some outlying London theatre, chiefly because it is claimed by no Dramatic Authors' Society, and is chargeable with no author's fees, we laugh at the writing and construction, pity the actors, and despise the taste and judgment of our grandfathers.

One of the worst of these pieces—though not by any means the worst—is the "Castle Spectre," a romantic drama by the celebrated Monk Lewis, first performed at Drury Lane, December 14th, 1797. It

was originally written in five acts, but has since been very judiciously reduced to three, and in the latter form it has been lately revived for a few nights at Sadler's Wells. The original cast comprised Mr. Kemble, Mr. Bannister, Mr. Barrymore, Mr. Palmer, and Mr. Dowton, with Mrs. Jordan as the principal female character. Mr. Kemble's part has suffered most by compression, according to an actor's way of looking at it.

The "Castle Spectre" has a flavour of that German romance which Monk Lewis imported into some of his other literary productions. He loved a ghost, and he loved a lord, and we have, therefore, several lords and a ghost in this tragic drama. The bad lord is feudal to a fault, surrounded by conventional dependants, amongst whom are some unconventional Africans. Ethiopian Serenaders and Christy Minstrels had not vulgarised the black man in 1797, and though the piece was received with some derision, the "black slaves of Osmond" were probably not the cause of this opposition. Hassan, a dignified slave—originally played by Mr. Dowton—is quite the poetical character of the piece, and it would be unpardonable not to give a taste of his quality:

"HASSAN. Saib, I too have loved! I have known how painful it was to leave her on whom my heart hung; how incapable was all else to supply her loss! I have exchanged

want for plenty, fatigue for rest, a wretched hut for a splendid palace. But am I happier? Oh, no! Still do I regret my native land, and the partners of my poverty. Then toil was sweet to me; for I laboured for Samba! Then repose ever blessed my bed of leaves; for there by my side lay Samba sleeping.

"SAIB. This from you, Hassan? Did love ever find a place in your flinty bosom?

"HASSAN. Did it? Oh, Saib, my heart once was gentle, once was good! But sorrows have broken it, insults have made it hard. I have been dragged from my native land, from a wife who was everything to me, to whom I was everything! Twenty years have elapsed since these Christians tore me away; they trampled upon my heart, mocked my despair, and, when in frantic terms I raved of Samba, laughed and wondered how a negro's soul could feel! In that moment, when the last point of Africa faded from my view, when as I stood on the vessel's deck, I felt that all I loved was to me lost for ever, in that bitter moment did I banish humanity from my breast. I tore from my arm the bracelet of Samba's hair; I gave to the sea the precious token, and while the high waves swift bore it from me, vowed, aloud, endless hatred to mankind. I have kept my oath; I *will* keep it!"

The story of the "Castle Spectre" is eminently sensational; it turns upon wholesale murder, and is soon told. Earl Osmond—the villain of the piece—after distinguishing himself in certain Scottish wars of an unknown period, has caused his elder brother and his brother's wife and child to be murdered, and has usurped Conway Castle, with all the property belonging to it. By one of those interpositions

peculiar to dramas, the brother and child were saved —the lady only having fallen a victim to provide a good ghost for the story. The brother, loaded with chains, and fed upon bread and water, has been immured for sixteen years in one of Earl Osmond's dungeons without the earl knowing it; the jailer being a dissatisfied dependant, who is a strange compound of greediness, cruelty, remorse, and pity. The child—a little girl—has grown up into the beautiful Angela, a supposed cottager's daughter, outside the castle gates, and has excited the worthy love of Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and the unworthy love of the villain, Earl Osmond. Falling into the power of the villain, this young lady becomes the mainspring of the drama—one party in Conway Castle struggling to keep her, the other party, outside the castle, struggling to rescue her. The underplot is filled up with three good, strong, serviceable stage characters—a fat monk, who loves flagons of wine and venison pasties; a jester, who is wise and impertinent; and an old housekeeper, who is timid and credulous.

The unity of place is strictly observed in this drama, as the action lies entirely within Conway Castle. With the exception of the first scene, which is merely introductory, the scenes seem to present pictures of a succession of dungeons. There are the

castle-hall, the armoury, the castle-hall again, a chamber, the castle-hall again, the cedar-room, the castle-hall once more, the cedar-room again, a vaulted chamber — which must be an imaginary Conway tubular passage of the Middle Ages—and a gloomy subterraneous dungeon. One sensation scene, which is badly put upon the stage, and where the most extraordinary gymnastic opportunities are thrown away, occurs where the captive Earl Percy, while his two black jailers are playing at dice, leaps out of a window into a sheet spread by his faithful followers below. The Sadler's Wells management, following the stage directions mechanically, have merely filled the stage with an ordinary dismal chamber, leaving the earl to leap out of a window at one of the upper wings, like a clown in a pantomime. Mr. Boucicault, with the same materials, would have divided the stage with a double built-up scene, showing the interior of the earl's dungeon on one side, and a seemingly unfathomable ravine on the other. The leap from the window, as well as the preparations for the leap, would have been seen by all, except those visitors in the side boxes who pay double prices to witness only half the show. Mr. Kemble was a very good actor, like most members of his family, but he was evidently not a good arranger of "business" for sensation dramas.

We are sorry to see Earl Percy—the only leading virtuous person in the piece, with the exception of the heroine—continually putting himself in situations where the villain seems to have the best of him in argument. When Percy is taken prisoner after having crept into Conway Castle in disguise to rescue Angela, he addresses Earl Osmond rather indignantly:

PERCY. Stay, sir, and hear me! By what authority presume you to call me captive? Have you forgotten that you speak to Northumberland's earl?

OSMOND. Well may I forget him, who could so far forget himself. Was it worthy of Northumberland's earl to steal disguised into my castle, and plot with my servant to rob me of my most precious treasure?

PERCY. Mine was that treasure; you deprived me of it basely, and I was justified in striving to regain my own.

OSMOND. Earl, nothing can justify unworthy means. If you were wronged, why sought you not your right with your sword's point? I then should have esteemed you a noble foe, and as such would have treated you: but you have stooped to paltry artifice, and attacked me like some midnight ruffian, privately and in disguise. By this I am authorised to forget your station, and make your penance as degrading as your offence was base.

Not improved by this warning, Percy attempts to tamper with his two black jailers, gives them a purse of gold, and receives another reproof:

PERCY. Here it is, and now unlock the door.

MULEY (*chinking the purse*). *Here* it is! And now I'm

obliged to you. As for your promises, my lord, pray don't trouble yourself to remember them, as I shan't trouble myself to remember mine.

PERCY (*starting*). Ha! what mean you?

SAIB (*firmly*). Earl, that we are faithful!

PERCY. What! will you not keep your word?

MULEY. In good troth, no; we mean to keep nothing—except the purse.

PERCY. Confusion! To be made the jest of such rascals!

SAIB. Earl Percy, we are none, but we should have been, could your gold have bribed us to betray our master. We have but done our duty—you have but gained your just reward; for they who seek to deceive others should ever be deceived themselves.

The ghost of Evelina (the name has a fine full Minerva Press flavour), appears only twice, and then in a costume of the true bleeding nun order. Her appearance, and the manner of her exit and entrance, can best be told, perhaps, by quoting the stage direction:

[*A plaintive voice sings within, accompanied by a guitar.*]

"Lullaby!—Lullaby!—Hush thee, my dear,
Thy father is coming, and soon will be here!"

ANGELA. Heavens! The very words which Alice——The door too! It moves! It opens! Guard me, good angels!

[The folding-doors unclose, and the oratory is seen illuminated. In its centre stands a tall female figure, her white and flowing garments spotted with blood; her veil is thrown back, and discovers a pale and melancholy countenance:

her eyes are lifted upwards, her arms extended towards heaven, and a large wound appears upon her bosom. Angela sinks upon her knees, R. C., with her eyes riveted upon the figure, which for some moments remains motionless. At length the spectre advances slowly to a soft and plaintive strain; she stops opposite to Reginald's picture, and gazes upon it in silence. She then turns, approaches Angela, and invokes a blessing upon her, points to the picture, and retires to the oratory. The music ceases. Angela rises with a wild look, and follows the vision, extending her arms towards it. The spectre waves her hand, as bidding her farewell. Instantly the organ's swell is heard; a full chorus of female voices chant "Jubilate!" A blaze of light flashes through the oratory, and Angela falls motionless on the floor.]

The final scene of the drama is worked up by bringing all the characters together in a gloomy dungeon. This cell is not like the humanitarian places of confinement provided by our modern prison authorities. It is feudal, and very—oh, so very gloomy! Here lies the prisoner of sixteen years—the supposed dead father of Angela. He is very like the half-starved father in Schiller's "Robbers," though he spares us the agony of dying hard in a bedgown. He rolls in the straw, clanking his chains, and indulges in the following lamentations:

REGIN. My child! my Evelina! Oh, fly me not, lovely forms! They are gone, and once more I live to misery. Thou wert kind to me, sleep! Even now methought I sat in my castle-hall: a maid, lovely as the queen of fairies, hung on my knees, and hailed me by that sweet name, "Father!" Yes, I

was happy ; yet, frown not on me, therefore, Darkness! I am thine again, my gloomy bride! Be not incensed, Despair, that I left thee for a moment; I have passed with thee sixteen years! Ah, how many have I still to pass? Yet, fly not my bosom quite, sweet Hope ; still speak to me of liberty, of light! Whisper, that once more I shall see the morn break, that again shall my fevered lips drink the pure gale of evening! Heaven, thou knowest that I have borne my sufferings meekly: I have wept for myself, but never cursed my foes ; I have sorrowed for thy anger, but never murmured at thy will. Patient have I been—oh, then, reward me—let me once again press my daughter in my arms ; let me for one instant feel again that I clasp to my heart a being who loves me. Speed thou to heaven, prayer of a captive!

[*He sinks upon a stone, with his hands clasped, and his eyes bent steadfastly upon the flame of the lamp.*]

In this dismal dungeon, Angela, flying through subterranean passages, with a friendly monk who favours her escape, comes suddenly upon her father ; here Earl Osmond, seeking his brother to murder him or see him properly murdered this time, comes suddenly upon Angela, and here Earl Percy with his followers, having broken into the castle, arrives in time to see Osmond stabbed by Angela under the approving eye of Evelina's ghost. Angela embraces Percy, Reginald kneels to Evelina's ghost, Osmond lies on his back, and the other characters dispose themselves as effectively as possible under the glare of a little blue fire.

This was the production of a leading literary man some eighty and more years ago, at the leading theatre in England, assisted by the leading manager and actors of that time.

ADAPTING FROM THE FRENCH.

MR. MORTON SCHNEIDER, who has been out on bail, and who described himself as an English dramatic author, was brought up at Bow Street on remand, charged with stealing a pocket-handkerchief from the person of M. Adolphe Hyacinthe, a French "man of letters," residing at the Hôtel de Provence, Leicester Square, London. The prosecution was conducted by Mr. Coke, from the office of Coke and Littleton, and the prisoner was defended by Mr. Shadrach, of the firm of Shadrach and Abednego. The prosecutor, who was examined through M. Albert, the sworn interpreter of the court, deposed that he was walking through Leicester Square, his custom always of an afternoon, on Thursday, the 18th of October, when he felt a slight tug at the tails of his coat, and turning rapidly round with great quickness, he observed the prisoner walking quickly with great rapidity

up a side street, court, or alley, leading into Soho, with what appeared to be his (the prisoner's) handkerchief in his hands. He (the prosecutor) followed him (the prisoner), but was unable to catch him, owing to his (the prosecutor's) ignorance of the sinuous tortuosities of the neighbourhood. He saw no more of the prisoner for several days, until he met him promiscuously by chance at a *table d'hôte*, or ordinary, held at a house near the Haymarket, much frequented or "used" by literary men. The prisoner then had the same handkerchief, which he openly displayed, as if rather proud of it, and the prosecutor noticed that the prisoner had had his, the rightful owner's, name taken out of the corner of the said handkerchief, and his own put in its place.

Cross-examined by Mr. Shadrach:

Was not the handkerchief thoroughly cleaned when you last saw it?

Prosecutor.—It was.

Mr. Shadrach.—Was it not very dirty—very unfit for an English audience—I mean an Englishman—when you say you last had it in your possession?

Prosecutor.—I cannot say.

Mr. Shadrach.—Don't beat about the bush, sir; tell the Court the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; was it not filthy dirty when you lost it, and clean and irreproachable when you found it?

The learned magistrate here interposed:

Do you admit the possession of the handkerchief, Mr. Shadrach?

Mr. Shadrach.—We do, your Worship, and shall soon show our defence when we have finished the cross-examination of the prosecutor.

The cross-examination then continued:

Mr. Shadrach (to the prosecutor).—You have not answered my last question. Was not the handkerchief spotless when you last saw it?

The prosecutor, after consulting for a few moments with his solicitor, Mr. Coke, admitted that it had been cleaned.

Mr. Shadrach.—And a new name put in the corner of it?

Prosecutor.—Certainly.

Mr. Coke having declined to ask any questions, Mr. Shadrach addressed the learned magistrate for the defence. He contended, on the part of the prisoner, Mr. Morton Schneider, that the appropriation of this handkerchief did not amount to stealing within the meaning of the Act; it was simply a bold and successful adaptation from the French. The word "steal" was an ugly word, too often used in connection with transactions in which annexation, or less offensive terms, would be more appropriate. The prisoner, Mr. Morton Schneider, was a well-known

literary man, and a member of the Dramatic Authors' Society. In the exercise of his vocation he had often taken pieces—that is, little dramas—and other property from the French, and, amongst the rest, from the prosecutor, M. Adolphe Hyacinthe. The prosecutor had never complained, or, if he had complained, had never brought his complaint before a legal tribunal. He allowed himself to be stripped of literary property worth many pounds sterling without saying a word, but made all the present fuss about a paltry handkerchief of the value of a few shillings. Mr. Morton Schneider never adopted more than one course in dealing with French property. What he did to French plays he did to French pocket-handkerchiefs. He relieved them, if he might be allowed the term, of all offensive impurities—made them English, in fact, and acceptable to the fastidious British public—and was justly entitled to put his own name or initials in the place of the name or initials of the coarser Frenchman, author and proprietor. Adaptation like this, he contended, was an art, and not a crime. Even admitting, which he, Mr. Shadrach, was not at all prepared to admit, that in adaptation the line ought to be drawn at pocket-handkerchiefs, still Mr. Morton Schneider ought not to suffer for an offence which the law had neglected

to define. He should ask the learned magistrate to dismiss the case.

Mr. Coke made no remark, and the learned magistrate took time to consider his decision. The court was crowded with adapters, and there was an attempt at applause near the close of Mr. Shadrach's speech, but it was quickly suppressed.

A DISCERNING BRITISH PUBLIC.

I DARE say the public thinks itself a remarkably clever creature—always right, always rational, always amiable, always beyond criticism—but I don't. I've seen a good deal of it, too, in my time, and I ought to know. People flatter it, and toady it, and call it fine names, and pretend that its enlightenment is beyond question, and its judgment final; while they believe the very opposite in their secret hearts, and give utterance to their real opinions in places where their voices have no influence.

I am one of those rogues, vagabonds, and outcasts—a stage-player. I never followed my profession with the holy devotion of one who is ready to sacrifice everything for the preservation of his art; I was not such a dreamy, impracticable ass; I went in to make money, and I made it. My experience taught me, that those men who were always aiming

at an ideal standard of perfection, were always living upon borrowed half-crowns; and as I felt no desire to live upon borrowed half-crowns, I avoided aiming at an ideal standard of perfection. My principle was ever to suit my market. If there had been a demand for a Highland fling in the middle of *Macbeth*, when I performed the chief character, I should have complied with it at once, without wasting much consideration upon the laws of taste, or the outraged manes of the immortal Shakespeare. If *Othello* could have been made more attractive by a few gymnastic evolutions before the senators, I should not have hesitated, when I was entrusted with the Moor, to turn him, for a time, into a Bounding Bedouin of the Desert. For all emergencies of this kind I was thoroughly prepared, and my versatile accomplishments made me a very useful member of the company. I have gone on with a violin and a wig between the pieces, and have tortured an air into such discordant variations that the public were in ecstasies, or believed they were, and applauded the distinguished foreign performer till the house re-echoed.

Poor things! If they had seen the laughter at their expense behind the curtain, if they had heard the criticisms that were uttered upon the criticisms in some of the journals, the newspaper writer would not have been quite so much in love with his art, and the

self-elected jury of the stalls would not have been quite so confident in their judgment.

My oocupation gave me a thorough contempt for my audience. Their applause had no value in my eyes, except for its effect upon my manager, as I generally found that it was lavished in the wrong place, and caught by every clap-trap trick I chose to lay for it. The same highly discriminating approbation that was bestowed upon me, was equally at the command of the elegant Moll Flanders, when she lectured upon Back Hair and the Penny Cyclopædia; or the unblushing Mr. Brummagem, when he exposed the whole art and mystery of picking pockets. I found that to study character—to search laboriously for appropriate costume—to spend hours in anxious thought before a looking-glass, striving to catch some fleeting aspect of face, some subtle peculiarity of gesture—was like throwing down a gauntlet of defiance to the world; like trying to benefit your fellow-creatures by inventing a steam-engine, or introducing vaccination. I never did it, oh, no! but I saw many miserable visionaries around me who did. Poor devils! they are nearly all now in asylums or in workhouses!

It is never wise for a popular favourite to risk an anti-climax. When he feels that he has done his best, or what is so considered by a discerning public,

he should gracefully retire from that branch of his profession, lest by foolishly lingering he should weaken a successful impression. This is my rule of action, and I have always observed it. After appearing in a drama, which ran triumphantly for two hundred nights, in the last scene of which I was shot from the mouth of a cannon, I felt that I had reached the apex of my art, and that the most judicious course would be to announce my farewell performance. The manager was astonished at my determination, not knowing its cause; and I might have obtained a temporary advantage by a considerable increase of salary. Seeing nothing before me, however, after such a popular triumph of high art and public appreciation, but a down-hill series of representations, growing weaker and weaker, I rejected the offer, and bade a final adieu to the legitimate drama.

I believe, when I thus left the theatre in the full tide of my success, that I might have commanded anything that a grateful public had to give, even to the costly suffrages of a select constituency. I gave no encouragement to those friends who hinted at such a questionable mark of distinction, but devoted all my attention to a more congenial and equally respectable field of enterprise—the tight-rope.

I found that public executions, prize-fights, bait-

ings of the mad ass, turning bulls loose with fireworks, dog-fighting, rat-killing, badger-drawing, cock-spurring, and many other permanent amusements, had been forcibly put down by Acts of Parliament, rather than destroyed by an improvement in taste and humanity; and that when any exhibition of a peculiarly dangerous but strictly legal character was advertised to take place, there was always a difficulty in finding room for the visitors. Inferring from this that the public of to-day was marvellously like the public of yesterday, and feeling that though Hockley-in-the-Hole, with all its brutal glories, had ceased to exist, there were hundreds of popular gardens ready to outshame its historical reputation, I turned my attention to the tight-rope and its adjuncts, with the view of realising a competency in the shortest space of time, and of showing that the study of the fine arts had not much softened the manners of the people.

Before a twelvemonth had rolled by, and the Whitsuntide holidays of a second season had set in, the walls of the metropolis were covered with blood-red placards, announcing that a Signor Lunatico had been engaged, at an immense expense, to go through one of the most daring acts upon the aërial rope that had ever been presented to the notice of a discerning British public. I was Signor Lunatico; and the

daring act was all, and even more than it professed to be—it was a wild and fantastic dalliance with suicide. I had had enough of hypocrisy and sham in connection with the legitimate drama; and this time I was about to earn my golden reward without deception.

The day, the hour, the minute, arrived at last, and never had such an audience assembled before at the Royal Greenacre Gardens. Every publicity had been given to the entertainment—the prospect of sudden death had been delicately hinted at—nothing, in fact, had been neglected by my intelligent manager, who had long felt the public pulse in such matters, and the result was that twenty thousand happy and amiable beings were accommodated within the grounds, while fifty thousand more clung desperately to the walls of their paradise, and a larger number still were damned in the outer darkness of a remote distance. People were trampled under foot, like a field of corn; the weakest went to the wall, and never came back again; mothers squeezed into the crowd with children at the breast, and—lawk-a-daisy! who would have thought it?—the poor helpless innocents were smothered; housetops were worth a guinea a foot in pure virgin gold; and every chimney within a mile of the place was the home of some straining column-stander. The tall old elms

that encircled the gardens were full to bowing down with eager human fruit; platforms of slender planks were hurriedly raised, which snapped like egg-chests under a brewer's dray, crippling many a determined sight-seer in the splintered ruin; tall men were looked upon with dangerous spite by soiled and battered dwarfs, who felt inclined to bound upon the giants' shoulders, and wind themselves in their hair, like star-fish amongst the sea-weed. A row of scaffolding before some newly-raised carcases of buildings at no great distance was stormed like a fortress, at almost the same cost, while the empty unseasoned skeletons of dwellings seemed to rock under the weight of heavy men, who clung to them as to a sinking wreck; and in the outskirts of the crowd a boy was murdered by a savage gang of costermongers because he refused to give up a telescope.

And what was the moving cause of all this excitement and wide-spread interest? A human being had undertaken to ascend a cord stretched from its root in the earth to a small harbour of refuge near the top of a lofty tree, some two hundred feet high; and while in the centre of his perilous journey—at the half-way house of death—by throwing several clear somersaults in mid-air, to linger and dally with that fearful suicide, which was just covered, but not concealed, by the thin disguise of a clever gymnastic

entertainment. Truly the British public had much ground for priding itself upon its rapid advance in taste and humanity!

The clock had already struck the hour at which I had promised to ascend, and the clown's dress, which I had selected for the probable sacrifice, was hardly put on in all its fantastic brilliancy; there was some pleasure in thinking that if I fell (as fall I might, although I felt pretty sure of my nerve and skill), I should die in the most absurd costume of the whole mumming wardrobe. I knew that the hundred thousand fools who came to gloat upon the daring act would want to see my body after death; and, while I had made arrangements to turn even this catastrophe to profitable posthumous account, I was desirous that my corpse should present an instructive picture. The terms of Jeremy Bentham's will, in which he left his remains to science and Southwood Smith, could not have been stricter than the last will and testament of Signor Lunatico.

The manager came in with a gold watch in his hand, very nervous at the delay, and fearful that, at the eleventh hour, I repented of my rashness.

"My dear sir," he said, "don't let me hurry you at such a moment, but the people are beginning to get impatient."

"Couldn't you murder a baby, a waiter, or

something of that kind," I replied, "to appease them?"

"Sir?" he returned excitedly, not seeming to comprehend me.

"Suppose," I said, "I feel heartsick and unequal to the effort?"

"Mr. War——; I beg pardon, Signor Lunatico," gasped the manager and proprietor of the Royal Greenacre Gardens, "I trust I am dealing with a gentleman?"

"Yes," I replied; "but gentlemen are human, and this experiment requires nerves that are superhuman."

"Mr. ——, Signor," returned the manager, "this is no time for bandying words. There's fifty thousand people in and about my gardens who will tear everybody and everything to pieces if they're disappointed——"

"Of their prey," I filled in.

"Sir," returned the manager, becoming more and more excited, "I don't understand you."

"Are they Christians?" I continued; "or are they white men?"

"Sir," repeated the gasping manager, "I don't understand you. They've paid their money."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," I said; "pray announce that I shall be ready in a second."

"Thank you, signor," he said, much relieved, as he left the place; and the next moment I heard the loud brass band playing the "Conquering Hero," &c.

I did it. Step by step I went up the rope, and as my howling enemies, the public, stood surging below and uttered what they meant to be applause every time I moved my motley-covered leg, I felt a contempt for my fellow-creatures that almost amounted to ecstasy. The somersaults were successfully effected at a point from which the enlightened British audience looked more contemptible still; and from my peaceful haven in the lofty tree-top they appeared to have sunk into utter insignificance.

The daring feat, after a few months' performance, lost at once its novelty and its reputation for daring. As I demonstrated by experiment that a series of somersaults could be effected with the same mathematical certainty upon a rope a hundred and fifty feet above the ground as upon the ground itself, my visitors fell off by degrees, and the advanced prices of admission were considerably diminished.

From the moment that the shadow of death no longer hovered over the feat, an enlightened British audience could see nothing wonderful in it.

A FINE OLD CRUSTED RIFLE CLUB.

I HAVE examined the rival claims of every rifle club that now forces itself upon my notice, and I am inclined to decide that, with only one exception, they are nothing but a set of noisy young upstarts; the exception I allude to is the Hon. Artillery Company.

Wandsworth may have its rifle patriots who are little, if anything, out of the common; Greenwich may rise into a nursery for young amateur soldiers, as well as an hospital for old broken-down sailors; Canonbury may attempt something more heroic than perpetually fishing in the old New River; but not one of these can boast of any fine old crusted historical flavour, like the Hon. Artillery Company of Bunhill Fields. It is something, perhaps, to be a volunteer; but it is certainly more to belong to an amateur military club, whose origin is guessed back

nearly ten centuries, into the reign of Alfred the Great, and whose green practising ground, almost as large as Trafalgar Square, was walled in more than three centuries and a half ago, and still continues one of the blessed lungs of air and life in the centre of a crowded city.

Provided with an order-paper, bearing that elaborate heraldic device where a diver is being carried in a portable bath by two Lord Mayor's procession-looking men, and (like an omnibus passenger) is tapping one of them with an uplifted stick, to cause them to "hold hard," I entered the screen-gate of the Bunhill Row entrance, and walked along the broad gravel pathway, with the green practising-ground on my right, towards the old "Armoury House," about half-way down, on my left. I found a rather sombre building with a portico entrance (built in 1622), looking out upon the green practising-ground in front, and upon the well-known burial-ground of Bunhill Fields, gorged with celebrities, at the back. I found a rude stone-paved hall on the basement-floor, with a corresponding chamber above, reached by a broad flight of oaken stairs; several offices, with a Board or Court room, scattered about the building; and an armoury at the back with a workshop for the cleaning of guns attached; besides a long shooting gallery, like a rope-walk,

that walls in the ground on the cemetery side, and separates the living from the dead.

The present Hon. Artillery Company dates its revived existence from 1610. After the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588, the nation seemed, for a time, to rest upon its laurels, and the practice of instructing the citizens in the use of arms was discontinued until James the First, under an order in council, breathed the breath of new life into the "Alderman's Love." In 1641, on the twenty-seventh of July, a lease of the Artillery Ground was granted by the Lord Mayor of the City of London, to Sir Paul Pindar and others, in trust, at the absurdly moderate rent of six-and-eightpence per annum. This ground, now fringed as it is with house property belonging to the company, brings in a yearly income of two thousand pounds per annum, which is expended for the benefit of the members, and in the payment of the different managerial officers, amongst whom are a chaplain, a physician, and two surgeons.

From 1610, the "Alderman's Love" rose gradually above any pinnacle of its former greatness, and numbered the impetuous Prince Rupert, the rat-hunted Duke of Monmouth, and many other celebrities in its ranks. That Whig saviour, the Prince of Orange, became a member in 1670, confirmed its

power and privileges in the year of his being crowned William the Third (1689), and declared himself its Captain-General in 1690. His example has been faithfully followed by Prince Albert, who, at this present moment, is the Commanding Colonel of the Company, which numbers about four hundred members. Each member, after being elected by ballot, has to pay an entrance-fee of five pounds (for which he has the use of all proper arms and accoutrements from the stores of the Company), and an annual subscription of two guineas. His dresses he has to find himself, according to the regulations of the Company.

My visit was on a Thursday evening, about half-past five p.m., a period devoted to what is called "judging distance drill," and "ball practice." Every member is bound to attend twelve of these drills every year, but the weather has a considerable influence upon amateur military ardour and punctuality.

At Finsb'ry, when the glass is low,
All spotless lies the untrodden snow,
And very scanty is the show
  Of warriors marching rapidly.

* * * * *

Few, few can part, for few will meet,
Amidst the drifting rain and sleet;
And, though the hall invites their feet,
  'Tis like a warrior's sepulchre.

The evening in question being fine, the members had already begun to muster pretty thickly. Standing under the portico of the Armoury House was a staid-looking legal gentleman, who had not yet altogether thrown off the business-like office look that he wore up to five o'clock in the afternoon, although he was leaning upon a grounded rifle in the attitude of a theatrical Italian brigand. Near him was a gentleman learned in all the mysteries of the Stock Exchange, who, being too indolent to attire himself in full regimentals, had put on an undress jacket, and a French military cap (the regulation artillery cap) over a pair of meek dove-coloured City trousers, leaving himself a strange mixture of the share-broker and the free-and-easy warrior. Young gentlemen who had been attending clearing-houses, counting money, balancing ledgers, paying dock charges, collecting accounts, attending sugar markets, or drawing bills of costs during all the business-hours of the business-day, bound through the hall and up the staircase, swallow a hasty mess dinner at fifteen pence a head, drink cooling drinks at a privileged canteen, or disappear in robing-rooms filled with yellow chests of drawers, like the sleeping-cabins of a ship, from which they emerge in about ten minutes transformed into an army of field-marshals. Every man is as good as his neighbour or his officers—and

better. Some of these field marshals brush by me in their thin warlike disguise, haunting me with glimpses of familiar faces that I have seen in more peaceable positions. They compel me to chase the dim recollection through my heavy memory, until I run it down at last, and find that I have met the particular field-marshal behind the desk of a Government office. My proctor is there, as fierce as Suwarrow or Marshal Soult; my bill-broker is very regular in attending on ball-practice nights, until it is reported that he could hit a fraudulent debtor at eight hundred yards; my tailor, who has never yet been able to satisfy my fastidious taste in the article of trousers, can manage a field-piece with the best gunner of Woolwich Marshes; and my mild-eyed, melancholy little friend in the feeble medical line, who is generally reputed to be under the government of his wife, has, by some strange persevering length of service and knowledge of duties, become the non-commissioned officer of a dashing company of his fellows. My watchmaker is there, and believes himself as superior to a French soldier of the line as an English watch has always been to a French timepiece. Some of the men (and they form no mean number of the whole body), look upon their membership as a "jolly lark," knowing little of the past history of the company, and caring less for its future. A few are under the impression

that rifle clubs are in some way connected with drill —drill with exercise—exercise with the reduction of a too rapid development of flesh, and they join the Hon. Art. Co. to test this chain of experiments. Some men go into the theory of the gunner's art in a pretty superficial manner, and read a few scientific authorities, from Robins to Douglas. They appear very learned upon velocities, concrete resistances, and curvilinear motion; are very fond of delivering little button-hole-holding lectures; and are not, as a general rule, very skilful with the instruments.

A few of the field-marshals escort their lady friends to the balcony and open windows of the upper hall, where a large number of visitors are seated to watch the evolutions on the green below, or to listen to the military concert which has just been commenced by the company's band of twenty paid musicians, before the portico of the building. Other field-marshals are busy explaining to visitors the single trophy of the company—a large white painted board, which hangs up in the lower hall, and forms a record of the last year's gun-practice in the Woolwich Marshes. The story it tells is that the company's marksmen have done well—in fact, very well; and it conveys the information by round black dots, placed at different distances upon circular

lines (a faithful copy of the target), looking altogether like a diagram of certain heavenly bodies exhibited at an astronomical lecture.

A company of forty men, in undress uniform, have, for some time, been going through certain evolutions on the green practising ground; nominally under the superintendence of their own commissioned officer (all the superior officers hold the Queen's commission), though actually under the firm but respectful direction of a hired drill-sergeant from the Tower of London. They are, at last, formed in marching order with a single drummer at their side, and marched out of the eastern gate of the parade-ground for "ball-practice" at Edmonton. Their course will be through the crowded streets of Tabernacle Row and the Curtain Road, to the Shoreditch Railway Station; and they will have the gratification of exciting a certain amount of wonder, criticism, and admiration as they go, if not of being followed by a crowd of boys, like a family of acrobats who are expected to "pitch." Some of the members will be rather nervous under this ordeal, and others rather proud. One young rifleman, greedy of notoriety, asked the attendant commander-in-chief, in familiar tones, if they were not to be allowed to take the band, and was extremely disappointed upon

finding that no such additional attraction could be permitted on this occasion.

After this early company is disposed of in this manner, the instruction to late-coming members is commenced. Several squads are formed by the drill officers, in which a few raw recruits, who have had no time to get their uniforms made, are mixed up with more experienced and more soldierly-attired men, where they look like deserters who are undergoing a punishment.

The shadow of ten centuries looks down upon them at their drill, and it ought to have an influence upon their movements. The medical-aristocratic back gardens of Finsbury Square are furnished with spectators, as well as the less pretending walls of Bunhill Row. The three screened gates, at the west, south, and east entrances, are crowded with small boys and girls, who hear the distant sounds of martial music floating on the wind. The appetite of these children for military spectacle is fed by dodging the door-keepers at each open gate, or cheering every member as a "noble capting" who prefers, with pardonable weakness, to walk home in all the glory of his full regimentals.

AN ALMOST FORGOTTEN ART.

SOCIETY, in these days, has run to seed. Ceremony has fled, taking dignity, and even gentility under its arm. People bow to me in the streets who have only met me once in a public coffee-room. People shake me by the hand almost before the words of introduction have left the introducer's lips; and, in half an hour they slap me on the back—a natural result of such a barbarous state of existence. Dress, the armour of true aristocracy, when carefully studied and rightly understood, has degenerated into its primæval condition—a rude covering, suggested by the necessities of public decency and animal comfort. To Art (I am not speaking of the ladies) it has no pretension. The Red Indian may be pitied, for he has never had the true models set before him; and yet, he has many advantages in costume over the modern Englishman. A well-made savage is known

and admired from one end of the prairie to the other. His physical symmetry is not hidden under the folds of loose, baggy coats, or under the equally baggy, and even more loose folds of the present fashionable trousers. Nowadays, in England, it matters little whether a man is a deformed cripple or an Apollo Belvidere. The tailor, governed by a barbarous custom, will equalise all that. We boast of our civilisation, and yet we encourage the growth of ready-made clothes-shops. Horror of horrors! I am old enough to remember Mr. Brummell, vulgarly called the Beau; I am wise enough to respect and admire him.

Can I imagine what would have caused the sudden death of that amiable and distinguished man? Certainly I can: A visit to a modern slop-shop. What is the material with which men now disfigure, not adorn, their persons? It is not broad-cloth. Has it descended from the ancient Britons in a subterranean store, long hidden, but at length found in a bleak part of the north of Scotland? Is it the skin of wild beasts, just scraped into wearable condition? Do the beings who wear this half-savage material indulge in valets? And, if so, are their clothes combed out instead of being brushed, like the shaggy manes of Shetland ponies? Much as I have been compelled to see of degeneration, I never expected human nature would sink to this. I have preserved the old style

with religious care and veneration; I have not been retiring, but have shown myself constantly in places of public resort, attired as I used to be when his ever-glorious majesty, King George the Fourth, was seated on the throne of England. I have admonished the young with my voice, the old by my example; but all to no purpose. The avalanche of barbarism has been too powerful for my poor, unaided, individual efforts, and I can only stand on one side, in dignified silence, a living protest to the existing state of things. Not altogether in silence, either. The old style will come back; it will come back, although I may not live to see it. Even now I find my once tight pantaloons shrinking into creases upon my wasted limbs; my figure is bent, and my coat no longer fits me like a skin. These signs of the coming end I could bear with patience and resignation, but my fingers, feeble with age and paralysis, are fast losing the divine art of tying that most perfect of all human creations—the glorious Cravat. My mind is still clear and vigorous, though I lack my hard-earned and once-admired mechanical skill. I can dictate, though I cannot perform. The world has long gone from me—receded, like the sea, leaving me high and dry, an isolated monument of the past. No matter; no matter. Let me, while I am able, record the principles of that art which has made me, in my most important part, the

monument that I am. I speak of the Cravat. It is not for the present that my words are meant—the present despises me and my teachings; it is for the future, the future now sleeping in its cradle, but which will rise one day into the long-buried dignity of its grandfather's and great-grandfather's costume; and, while dwelling with joy and gratitude upon these words, perhaps will say: "And he, too, was a Corinthian."

It is little satisfaction to me to trace the history of the Cravat. I saw it reach perfection in Mr. Brummel (vulgarly called the Beau), and I do not care to dwell upon it in any ruder state. I cannot believe in the reputed luxury of the Romans, when I gaze upon pictures of their greatest men with necks bare to the very roots, and chests scarcely covered with the folds of the heavy and ungraceful toga. I pass over the period when in France and several parts of Europe, the throat was covered loosely with a fine starched linen cloth, worn above the shirt, without a collar, the ends being brought down on the breast, and there fastened by laces of thread. I pass over the period, next in succession, when the ruff, stiffened and curled in single or double rows, became the favourite, and continued so while the hair was worn short. I pass over the next period, when Louis XIII. allowed his hair to grow, and raised collars, plaited

neckcloths, and bands (both plain and of lace), enveloped the necks of our ancestors, from the neck to the chin, and covered the tops of the arms and the shoulders. I pass again over the next period, when Louis XIV. adopted the enormous flaxen or black peruke, and the neck, then half concealed, was more than half neglected, being adorned with nothing more substantial than strips of bright-coloured ribbons arranged in bows.

Up to this time, I believe that nothing approaching the Cravat was seen upon the necks of civilised Europe. In 1660 (so I read) a regiment of Croats arrived in France, and a part of their singular costume excited the greatest admiration. The common soldiers wore a neckcloth made of common lace; the officers one of muslin, or silk, the ends being arranged like a rosette, or ornamented with a button or a tuft, which hung gracefully on the breast. This new necktie, which confined the throat very slightly, was at first termed a Croat, afterwards corrupted into Cravat.

The Cravats of the officers and people of rank were extremely fine, and the ends were embroidered or trimmed with broad lace; those for the lower orders were subsequently made of cloth or cotton, or at the best of black taffeta, plaited. I cannot help comparing the present dress of our own lower

orders with that of these peasants who lived in what we are pleased to consider a semi-barbarous age. We have given our inferiors baths and washhouses, but we have suffered them to lose even the tradition of the Cravat. We have improved them on one side, but we have allowed them to degenerate on the other.

The Cravats of the lower orders at that period were fastened behind the neck with two small strings; and when these strings, a little later, were replaced by clasps, or a buckle, the Cravat then changed its name, and was known as a Stock. This latter variation of the Cravat proper was always a favourite with the military profession: I mean, of course, the officers.

When a regiment, from overwork, or an insufficiency of food, presented a sickly appearance, by obliging the men to tighten their Stock as much as they could bear without suffocation, a ruddy glow was produced in the face, and every sign of a full habit of body. These Stocks, in my time, were made of black horsehair, tolerably hard, and they were afterwards transformed into a collar as firm as iron, by the insertion of a slip of wood, which, acting on the larynx, and compressing every part of the neck, gave the eyes a wonderful prominence, and the wearer an almost supernatural appearance of healthy

vigour. The only fault that I can find with these Stocks is that they were all made of nearly one size to fit necks that were long, short, thick, or thin. This is the crying evil of the military clothing system; and when I reflect that men who, in the common course of things, can only dress a certain number of times, are willing for a small daily pay to sell themselves as carrying blocks for all kinds of tailors' abortions, I can only shudder at such lamentable and general instances of wasted opportunities and physical prostitution.

Let me, however, dwell no further upon the history of the Cravat; but let me devote all my faculties to the clear laying down of that now almost, if not entirely forgotten art—the art of putting it on. It is no trifling task that I undertake, for there are no less than thirty-two different styles of wearing this ever-glorious article of apparel. Let not the youth, and even the manhood of the present day—strong for a few hours in the ephemeral fashion of an almost Roman bareness of neck—strong in dog-collars and neckties, slender as the ribbons worn round the delicate throat of a boarding-school girl—let them not, I say, despise the exposition of the first principles that govern the tying of the ever-glorious, but temporarily despised Cravat; for as no man can build a house, or lay out a garden without uncon-

sciously working a problem contained in the book of Euclid, so can no man sling even a piece of pudding-string over his neck, without imitating feebly one of the thirty-two styles which I am about to explain for his instruction.

When the Cravats are brought from the laundress they should undergo a careful examination. Strictly understand and bear in mind, that the set of the Cravat and the neatness of the tie entirely depend on its being correctly got up.

Starch gives a combination of substance, elasticity, and suppleness to the handkerchief, and by filling up the smallest holes effectually excludes the cold air in winter. In summer it prevents the Cravat adhering too closely to the neck, and thereby producing an uncomfortable heat. Distinctly understand, that whatever style may have been adopted in putting on this ever-glorious article of apparel, when the knot is once formed (good or bad) it must never be changed under any pretence whatever. I had this from the lips of the distinguished Mr. Brummel (vulgarly called the Beau) whom I had the unspeakable happiness of numbering amongst my personal friends and acquaintances.

The shirt-collar—although of secondary importance—should be perfect in its way, smooth, stiff, lofty, and nearly the shape of a deep basin. A small iron,

with a long handle, made expressly for the purpose, and moderately warm, is the best instrument for producing a thin and equal edge to the Cravat; and it will also serve to smooth the tie. I had the pleasure of receiving this information from the lips of the late Mr. Brummel (vulgarly called the Beau).

I now come to the thirty-two different styles of wearing the Cravat; and, first of all, it is necessary to devote a little attention to the celebrated problem known as the "Gordian Knot," the key to all the others, which are, in fact, derived from this alone.

Your Cravat, for this tie, must be stout, large, and well starched and ironed. You fold it in long narrow strips at both ends until it presents the appearance of two cricket-bats joined together in the middle, with the handles projecting at each side. First, you wind it carefully round your neck until it presents the picture of a large bucket, with two narrow streams of water (the two ends) pouring out at each side. Secondly, you take these two ends, tying them in a half-knot round the bucket, leaving one sticking up perpendicularly past the tip of your nose and above your head, and the other reclining on your heart in a slightly slanting position. Thirdly, you take the end which reclines on your heart, giving it a curving bend over your chest towards your right arm, at the same time bringing down the perpendicular strip with a

bend over the half-knot, pointing the end this time strictly towards your feet. Fourthly, you take this strip, bending it in the form of a ring and drawing the end through the curving bend of the other strip, until it projects in a slanting direction over your left shoulder, and you have thus accomplished the desired knot. Fiftly and lastly, you flatten the knot with the smoothing-iron (before mentioned), lower the two ends until they cross each other in letter X fashion; underneath the ring place a pin or brooch at the point of contact, and you are a happy man, for your Cravat is complete.

Having explained the problem (to the best of my ability without pictorial illustrations), I will now touch upon its variations:

First comes the Oriental Cravat, in appearance, as it stands up without a wearer in it, not unlike a flower-pot. The distinguishing peculiarity which gives it its title is a crescent formed by the two small, strongly-starched ends, which curve up on each side of the knot, sustained with a piece of whalebone. Next comes the American Cravat, looking like a large breakfast-cup. The ends are brought down in a straight line over the exact centre of the chest. The prevailing colour is sea-green, or striped blue, red, and white. Then follows the Horse-collar, in shape like an alehouse quart-pot, the ends being carefully

rolled round, displaying no tips, so as to form the broad, thick rim at the base. The colour is either black, or that of Russia leather. Next comes the Sentimental Cravat, not unlike the Horse-collar inverted, the rim being at the top, under the chin, instead of the bottom, upon the chest, formed in front into a small, double bow-knot.

Then follows the Byron Cravat, which consists of a single ring round the neck, tied in front in a large bow, not unlike a pair of boxing-gloves. Next, in succession, is the Cascade Cravat, in which the usual tub-like structure is preserved round the neck, while the ends, left full and unstarched, are allowed to flow, like a waterfall, over the whole front of the shirt. Next comes the Bergami Cravat, consisting of a long narrow strip passed once round the neck, and crossed over the bosom, like the white straps outside a Grenadier's coat. Then follows the Ball Cravat, which possesses the crossed straps of the Bergami, combined with the quart-pot neck bandage of the Horse-collar. Then comes the Mathematical Cravat, exactly like a drum, the ends like the Grenadier's straps before mentioned, being crossed over its surface, and not over the chest of the wearer. Next follows the Irish, which, in form and ornament, is exactly like the Mathematical Cravat, except that the ends are twisted in the centre, the right going back to the right, the left to the left.

Then comes the Maratte Cravat, a lasso-like sling round the neck, resembling the Byron in its rude freedom, the ends being twisted in the same manner as the Irish. The twelfth and last on this list is the Gastronomical Cravat, judiciously curtailed for the advantage of diners-out. The cup, or bandage round the neck, is loose and shallow, like a finger-glass, and the ends, short and well starched, are turned back from the chest on each side in the shape of an inverted crescent. The shallowness and breadth of a cup give freedom to the wearer in the exertion of dining; and the retiring position of the ends prevents their being soiled by the droppings of soup or gravy.

First of the eighteen variations of the foregoing twelve variations is the Hunting Cravat. A large coffee-cup round the neck, with the end screwed into a rope fastened in a straight line down the chest, as thick as a ship's cable. The colour of this is generally deep green, and when it is white it gives rise to another variation—the Diana Cravat. Then follows the English Cravat, which is formed in the same way as the Gordian Knot, without being starched. Next comes the Cravat of Independence, the same as the American, except in colour, being composed of red, blue and white, in alternate stripes; all other shades are strictly prohibited.

Then follows the Portmanteau Cravat, a goblet

bound round at the base with a bandage and a short bow; the favourite colour being that of Russia leather. Next comes the Shell Cravat, differing very slightly from the Portmanteau, except that the tie is worked into the form of a shell, or rather of one of those fancy loaves, called a twist. Next on the list is the Travelling Cravat, put on in the same way as the Byron; after which comes the Colin Cravat, a loose tie under a turned-down collar, consisting of a ring and two free ends. It is only worn by countrymen, and persons of very imperfect education. Next follows the Fountain Cravat, which does not differ from the Cascade, and is confined chiefly to coachmen, butlers, stablemen, and grooms. Next comes the Broken Heart Cravat, the same as the Bergami, the favourite colour being red. Next in succession is the Lazy Woman Cravat, which combines the advantage of concealing the shirt, or the absence of one, and concealing the necktie. It is a Cravat and a waistcoat rolled into one. Then comes the Romantic Cravat, another offshoot of the Byron. Following this is the Cravat of Fidelity, nearly the same as the Mathematical Cravat. It must be black, and folded on a whalebone stiffener, and should be so carefully put on as to prevent all appearance of the shirt, except the collar, which must be of the most dazzling white. Next comes the Talma Cravat, a

rude sling like the Byron and Bergami, and always black. Then follows the Italian Cravat, formed in nearly the same manner as the Irish, but instead of turning the ends round each other, they are passed through a ring. The bandage round the neck is a full alehouse quart. Next comes the Diplomatic Cravat, the same as the Gastronomical; followed by the Russian Cravat, a stock that is fastened at the back of the neck. Finally, we come to the Jesuit Cravat, which is a Cravat in appearance only. The waistcoat must be made like a cuirass, and the collar must be high enough to conceal the neck entirely. The shirt-collar is turned down, and forms a kind of band.

Such are the outlines and divisions of that ever-glorious part of a glorious fashion which was honoured and admired when I was a young man, and the chosen friend and companion of the celebrated Mr. Brummel (vulgarly called the Beau). In those days the greatest insult that could be offered to a man was to seize him by the Cravat, and only blood could wash out the stain upon the honour of either party. In those days no gentleman ever thought of travelling, even in the meanest form, without being prepared with, at least, a dozen of plain white Cravats, the same quantity of spotted and striped white Cravats, a dozen of coloured ditto,

three dozen at least of shirt-collars, two whalebone stiffeners, two black silk Cravats, and the indispensable smoothing-iron. In those days the neck was treated with the respect due to a noble column, whose allotted task it was to support, in a proper and dignified manner, that Corinthian capital, the head. In those days no gentleman ever thought of appearing after dusk, except in strict evening dress; and the proprieties of costume extended not only to the opera (as, in some degree, at present), but to every theatre and public garden in the country. Now (so I am told) you may present yourself at any place of public resort (except the opera, Lord bless it!) dressed like a prize-fighter or a stage-coachman, and never, for a moment, run the risk of being refused admittance. In those days, when a gentleman was dressed, he was dressed in the strictest sense of the term. There was no nonsense about him; he was not to be trifled with. He neither ran nor leaped: he was stately, dignified, imposing, and respectful to the clothes which covered him. His tailor was elevated into the rank of an artist; his hairdresser looked affectionately upon him; his hosier took an interest in him; his laundress was a person of consequence, with money in the funds. But now all these things and conditions are gone, or are reversed; and we live in an age of dangerous and democratic equality, when the noble-

man cannot be distinguished from his bootmaker, and the bootmaker in his turn from the humblest workman in his shop. Hair-powder was the first bulwark of true aristocracy which the superior classes blindly gave up; and the Cravat was the next. May it be the last! And may all who have sat, as I have sat, at the feet of that great Gamaliel of fashion, the late Mr. Brummel (vulgarly called the Beau), unite in raising their feeble hands and voices, as I have raised mine, in the memory and defence of that which ought never to have gone, and which, we hope, our great-grandchildren, yet unborn, may be destined in the future to bring back!

LETTERS TO THE (SELDOM-AT-) HOME SECRETARY.

I.

THE CITY OF UNMITIGATED POT-HOUSES.

SIR,

If it is possible for any Minister to spare time from clumsy attempts to regulate the Universe, and to learn that one parochial gutter well swept is worth a hundred foreign dependencies over-governed into madness, it certainly would be advisable for that Minister to grapple with our Licensing Chaos. The worship of the Sacred Jackass is carried a little too far when this Chaos is dignified with the name of System. Four millions of wretched rate and tax payers, doomed to live in the most dismal City of Unmitigated Pot-houses on the face of the earth, are bound over, hand and foot, as far as their amusements

are concerned, to an irresponsible Court Official and six hundred of the most ignorant, prejudiced—possibly venal, and certainly narrow-minded—creatures that a Lord-Lieutenant can pick out from the dreary ranks of respectability. This unwieldy assembly, with the exception of the Court Official, is set in motion by a brutal Act of Parliament that is a notorious disgrace to a not over-creditable Statute Book. Originally framed to stop the singing of Jacobite songs, which the Dutch monarch of the period feared, but could neither read, sing, nor understand, and ostensibly directed in the coarsest terms against the "social evils" of 1750, this precious sample of antique legislation has descended to 1880, and administered as it is by a body only worthy of such an Act, it now paralyses the amusements of four millions of Londoners. Once during its long existence it has been amended or tinkered, but in a way that reflects the utmost discredit on its timid tinkers. When it was discovered, about three or four years ago, that, under its heaven-born provisions, a few harmless old women sitting at a concert before five o'clock in the afternoon were committing an indictable offence, it was thought by those who knew little of the cowardice of weak-kneed Governments, that the days of this triumph of legislative wisdom were certainly numbered. They were thoroughly mis-

taken. The ulcer was simply cut out, when the body ought to have been strangled; and the 25 Geo. II. cap. 36 still remains to comfort the true worshippers of the Sacred Jackass.

Amongst the countless pot-houses in this City of Pot-houses there are about four hundred that hold a music licence, and perhaps about twenty that hold a music and dancing licence. The owners of these houses go to one licensing authority for tobacco, to another for beer, and to another for the licence to sell wines and spirits. Thanks to the Omnipotence of Gin and Beer in the councils of the nation, they have little difficulty in obtaining the drink licences if they stand well with the two great drink-producing interests.

Of course the usual hypocrisy is shown in all public debates on this question. Every Member—Minister or no Minister—carefully ignores the fact that one-third of our enormous national expenditure is drawn from national drunkenness; and the unfortunate publicans are snubbed and lectured as if they were criminals, instead of active feeders of the Revenue. Any attempt to temper Gin and Beer with Music and Dancing is resisted by the compact Maw-worm class who rule the Licensing Sessions. Ten thousand applications for Music and Dancing would be made to-morrow if there were anything like free-

dom and wisdom in our Licensing Chaos. London would become as sober and cheerful as Paris or Vienna. The sot would become a singer, the wife-kicker a dancer; and what would be lost in one way by the Exchequer would be gained in another. The million or more sterling now invested in London Music-halls would be exposed to competition; but, on the other hand, the owners of this property would feel an unwonted security in their investments.

We mention these "vested interests" because we know the weakness and the composition of Governments; but there is a broader ground on which to argue this question—that of public convenience. The four millions of people in this City of Unmitigated Pot-houses have a right to demand as many music and dancing rooms as they think they require; and the supply, we presume, as usual, will follow the demand. If any one of these rooms is mismanaged, that may be a reason for punishing the proprietor; but it is no reason for closing the rooms, any more than the adulteration of bread would be a reason for the closing of a bakery. An ignorant and under-paid Policeman is not the proper person to judge and report upon the management of public amusements, any more than a sour body of unpaid Puritans—six hundred in number—is a fitting body to license these amusements. If all the Conventicles of London were

put under the direction of six hundred Comic Singers, divided into a dozen or more conflicting jurisdictions, it is possible that even the Meddlevex Magistrates and the worshippers of the Sacred Jackass would be converted to something like reason and justice.

II.

A NEW WOULD-BE GOVERNMENT.

SIR,

London is about to be pestered with a new form of Government. We have Imperial rulers who seem able to manage nothing that is not ten thousand miles from England; we have Local Rulers who are pulling down half London at a cost of countless millions, and fattening a hungry herd of land-jobbers, builders, and contractors, and now we have a new assembly springing into existence—a kind of Long-Eared Parliament, with deliberative and suggestive functions, but at present with little practical authority. This new would-be Government is no other than the Meddlevex Irresponsibles, who, probably to save themselves from speedy extinction, are displaying a fussy activity in fields far beyond the control of those fossil Acts of Parliament which have enabled them to make London one of the gloomiest and most disreputable cities in the world. Yesterday they were annihilating Music-halls, to-day they are attacking or asking others to attack Convents, and to-morrow they may deliberate about Clubs, and suggest further restrictions on private and public liberty.

In their onslaught upon religious bodies they have shown even more than their average ignorance and mendacity. During their one-sided and pre-arranged discussion there was no voice to tell them that no religious bodies object to any inoffensive Government inspection. Sitting in all their wooden pride and self-sufficiency, glorying in the belief that Clapton and Stoke Newington are the solitary possessors of the true faith, and they, the Clerkenwell Fantoccini, its only true apostles, they had no one to tell them that Catholics are as careful of their sons and daughters as sour-faced Puritans, and far less likely to consign them to an unlicensed, uninspected prison. How many of the homes of these sombre *Incubi* of London are much more cheerful than prisons? and how many of their families enjoy much more liberty than convicts?

The world is often governed, and is sometimes quite content to be governed, by fools, but the fools must be brilliant, and have some points of sympathy with the governed. But here is an unwieldy mass of nameless mediocrities, speaking through mouthpieces that are hardly up to the lowest Vestry level, who, having made the licensing system a farce, and our chief thoroughfare an open market for brazen prostitution, are now asking a sluggish Government Department that has never yet grappled with half its legitimate work, though it has grappled with a hundred

times its legitimate payment, to light once more the ancient Smithfield fires of discord.

The Home Office has committed many follies in its time—follies that have led to crimes; but the instinct of self-preservation, which Governments share with the lowest animals, will surely save it from this last act of Clerkenwell-inspired idiocy.

III.

FIDDLING WHILE ROME IS BURNING.

SIR,

The "Catastrophe at Vienna," as it is now familiarly called, is an event of such European importance—so far removed from any suspicion of parochial pettiness—that it will probably excite the attention of the important department over which you have the honour to preside. In the fulness of time an official report will doubtless be made, and the British taxpayer will be the richer by another Blue Book. There are people, however, in the world, belonging to the class who provide the blood and sinews of Government, who think that we are already choked with Blue Books, and grossly misgoverned by injurious and conflicting Acts of Parliament.

Without waiting for any report, without waiting for the return of the multitude of talkers to Westminster, who are practically under the thumb of Mr. Parnell, you have surely heard and read enough to convince you that our present Licensing Chaos is a disgrace to the country, and a greater disgrace to those who profess to govern the country. If we spent our money niggardly, and paid our Ministers and

Officials like German Princes or American Presidents, we could hardly expect to be better treated; but one hundred and twenty millions a year, more or less, ought certainly to provide something better than higgledy-piggledy legislation.

The only official who has shown a desire to do his duty, according to his limited lights, is the Lord Chamberlain; but who is the Lord Chamberlain? A Court functionary, irresponsible to Parliament, whose duties and responsibilities are now partially shared by the Associated Bumbles of Spring Gardens, and whose authority hardly extends to one-tenth of the places of amusement opened and crowded every night in London. Covent Garden and Drury Lane Theatres, under the gift of Charles II., are beyond his jurisdiction, and four hundred and twenty-five music-halls, concert-halls, and theatres, besides these, owe no obedience to his mandates. They are feebly —very feebly—governed by four or five separate authorities—Meddlevex Magistrates, Divisional Magistrates, Kent and Surrey Magistrates, the City of London Magistrates, &c.—but no one troubles much whether they have proper entrances, extra exits, oil-lamps, firemen, double gas supplies, or no gas at all. And yet in these numerous places of amusement, under many authorities, but no Lord Chamberlain, nearly two hundred and thirty thou-

sand people—including children and idiots—assemble every night to be probably entertained, or probably burnt, or probably smothered. In four hundred of these places the entertainments given are probably illegal, as the stupid and brutal Act of Parliament (25 Geo. II. cap. 36) under which they are licensed either withholds dancing where dancing cannot be avoided, or grants dancing without knowing whether it is licensing floor-dancing or stage-dancing.

Another beautiful piece of pot-house legislation—the slap-you-and-put-you-to-bed Act of Lord Neverdare—does all it can to make many of these places, and some of the Lord Chamberlain's theatres, as unsafe as possible, by bricking up the best and most obvious extra exits, because they may communicate between a theatre and a tavern! And yet, in the face of this, under an Act of William IV., there is nothing to prevent a theatre being flooded with gin, while the water companies put every difficulty in the way of its being flooded with water. One authority orders doors to "open outwards," while an Act of Parliament orders them to open inwards; and generally the muddle and chaos would disgrace a tenth-rate island governed entirely by red-tape, sealing-wax, and folio-foolscap with a margin.

It remains to be seen, sir, whether you can spare time from the regulation of the Universe, and bring your

acknowledged intellect to bear on what one day will turn out to be a "burning question." Be warned before it is too late. This pestilent jungle of half-blind authority, no authority, and divided authority, must be cleared at any cost, and it will be better for those to clear it who are paid for the work than to leave it to an enraged public or the irresponsible ministers who are now sitting at the Munching House. Do something to show that there is still some vitality left in the creaking bones of the Liberal Party, and that government is not a lost art in your bewildered country.

THE DUKE OF MUDFORD AND BUMBLEDOM.

THERE is a bond of sympathy between Dukes and Beadles which is not altogether for the public interest. The Duke of Mudford is not only allowed to fatten upon Mud-Salad Market, but he is allowed this privilege on cheaper terms than his neighbours. He is rated with the lightest possible parochial touch. He is allowed the free use of dozens of so-called "thoroughfares," and for his Market proper he is put down at the far too moderate assessment of £10,000 a year, with an additional £1200 a-year for the new Flower Market. His theatres are favoured by the local authorities to an almost equal extent. The huge area of Drury Lane Theatre is only rated at a few more annual pounds than the Gaiety Theatre, which is less than half its size, and Covent Garden Theatre, with its vast annexe, called the Floral Hall, is equally a pet of the parish. These two colossal

properties are put upon nearly an exact equality with the little Vaudeville, the smaller Olympic, and the smallest Strand. The humour—the practical fun—of Bumbledom does not end here. The Lyceum is rated at nearly £500 a-year less than the Gaiety, though it is practically half as large again, and the Globe and the Opéra Comique are let off, for some mysterious reason, for little more than half the rates levied on the Olympic and the Vaudeville, though their holding capacity is just double. The Adelphi is scarcely fairly treated by being assessed at nearly three times the amount levied on the Opéra Comique or the Globe, as it can hardly claim to be more than a fourth larger than these houses.

There is a grim pleasure in drawing the attention of Theatrical Managers to these beauties of parochial taxation. The new assessments have just been made, and the old assessments were more unequal still. There is no appeal, and nothing can be altered for the next five years. Such is the elasticity of Local Self-Government.

SCHOOL BOARD PAPERS.

I.

GOOD behaviour is the art of behaving good. It comprises deportment, dress, language, and other important details.

Deportment may be natural or acquired. If natural, as in the case of the late lamented Beau Brummel and His Sacred Majesty George IV., there is nothing to do but to look on, admire, and copy. If acquired, it must be according to the canons laid down by Beau Nash of Bath, and religiously preserved by several generations of teachers.

In entering a room you must turn out your toes, and must not put your hands in your pockets. If Nature has turned your toes in, you must correct Nature, even at the cost of physical suffering. Nature is a thing to write poetry about, but not to drag into the drawing-rooms of polite society. As an employ-

ment for the hands, which are difficult to deal with, art has provided snuff-boxes, canes, and eye-glasses for men, and fans, smelling-bottles, and eye-glasses for ladies. In your salutations you must never forget that it is unpardonable to shake hands with the two extremes of society. You kiss the hands of Princes, Dukes, and Prime Ministers, and you present your hand to be kissed by footmen, crossing-sweepers, and poor relations. You must never sneeze in polite circles, even at the expense of breaking a blood-vessel; and if you find a hot potato in your mouth in the same society, you must swallow it at the risk of your life, rather than break the rules of good behaviour.

In the matter of dress you are spared the trouble of thinking. Society appoints one or two tailors, and one or two dressmakers, from time to time, and you must go to these people for your outward clothing. Whatever they make you, you must wear—whatever they charge you, you must pay. If you feel uncomfortable, or look ugly, or have reason to be dissatisfied with their prices, you have the satisfaction of knowing that nearly all the people you meet are in the same condition.

In the matter of language we enter a much wider field. There are Grammars and Pronouncing Dictionaries, but Society sometimes creates rules of

its own which are not strictly in accordance with the received authorities. To side with the authorities is to be a fogey and a pedant; to side with Society is to be a model of good behaviour.

It would be extremely vulgar to say "sassenger" for sausage, but such a pronunciation might become fashionable from a variety of causes, and then it would be your duty to follow the fashion. When you are introduced to a Duchess, and she asks after your health, it is hardly polite to say you are "right as a trivet," or "A 1;" but it is quite possible for a popular member of the aristocracy to bring such expressions into use, in which case you would probably be right in using these peculiar idioms. A great deal will depend upon the time and nature of the introduction, the surrounding circumstances, etc. It is almost impossible to lay down any hard and fast rule which will be applicable at all seasons.

In the pronunciation of words some allowance is always made for provincial accents. In England, the North-country dialects are much favoured, but the Scotch dialect is the most favoured of all. It is fortunate for Robert Burns that he was born a Scotch poet, as it more than doubled his chance of rhyming. When he could not make a melodious couplet with away, he wrote *awa'*, and when the word penny would not lend itself easily to his song, he wrote

bawbee, and skipped gaily over the difficulty. Scotch, however, should be used as sparingly as possible in the drawing-room—as sparingly as the bagpipe is used at public concerts. Of course this remark only applies to the state of things as they exist at the present moment. A change in fashion—the transfer of the Court and all its belonging to Scotland—might make the Scotch dialect the language of the time, and the bagpipe the national instrument. Our mouths and ears would then have to be tuned to different notions of grammatical and musical propriety, and our text-books altered to suit the occasion.

II.

To resume the subject of language. There are many expressions which are perfectly within the rules of grammar and the usages of good society, but which can hardly be quoted as models of elegance. For example, it is not uncommon for persons of position and education to ask you if you object to dine off a leg of mutton. Your natural impulse would be to answer, "No; as long as it is not too far off the leg of mutton;" but in this, and in all similar cases, you must check your natural impulses, and become decent, commonplace, and even dull. Re-

partee is only allowed on the stage in fashionable comedy; in society it leads to the street-door.

In alluding to any article of food, or in drawing up what is vulgarly called a "bill of fare," you must always use the French language. You may not understand it, your guests may not understand it, and the servants will certainly not understand it, but for all this it must be used. You must never call soup anything but *potage*, your steak must be christened a *filet*, and the vulgar chop must be softened into the more aristocratic *côtelette*. The dinner itself is always described as a *diner à la Russe*. This does not mean that there is one person dining who is very chilly, or is dressed in the Russian costume, nor does it mean that the dishes, or rather fragments of dishes, are served up cold. Any person who thinks that the traditional cold mutton is the real dinner *à la Russe* is thoroughly mistaken. The dinner *à la Russe* is a dinner at which you never see the joints, and are led to believe that you are dining off Christmas-trees, flowers, glass, and Lowther Arcade toys. Small pieces of food are brought to you from behind a screen, which are called *entrées*, not entries. The roast meats are called *rôt*, which is not a vulgar expression, although it looks very much like it. The fish is always called *poisson*, another curious expression; while beans are called *flageolets*,

and a certain red wine has a name which sounds like French for pomatum. The curiosities of the *menu*, as it is called in place of bill of fare, are so numerous that they are worthy of a separate lecture.

The abbreviations sanctioned by custom, which ought properly to come under the head of slang, can hardly be neglected. From the time of the three R's, until a very recent period, this somewhat mechanical form of humour showed no tendency to increase, but lately fashion has moved in this direction; and fashion, as we have said before, must be respected. The three F's are now added to the list; to-morrow we may have the three G's, and the following day the three H's. It is curious to notice how manners change with the times. Our grandfathers had a favourite toast or phrase, "Wine, women, and walnuts," and when they were in a jocular mood, they altered this to "Vine, vomen, and valnuts." This was their simple notion of humour. If they had been as clever as we are, they would have alluded to this toast mysteriously as the three W's, and in moments of overwhelming hilarity as the three V's. We have much to be thankful for.

III.

The object of all education, as you are doubtless aware, is to soften your manners and suffer you not to be brutal. The kind, good, and patient ratepayer, who finds the money to refine you, is under the impression that he or his children will reap the benefit of this refinement in a decrease of criminality, or rather illegality, and its consequent expenses. Let him not live and die under a false impression. Soften your manners to the consistency of pap. Never let your angry passions rise beyond the level of genteel indignation; never let your more or less little boots, and the more or less little feet that are in them, be found jumping on a sister or a mother. Check unruly speech. Your little tongues were never formed to make disrespectful observations about each other's eyes.

I say, Check unruly speech. I may go further and say, Never use language that is not largely diluted with water. Never say you loathe a thing, when you have such a harmless word as dislike. Never call people vicious, when you can describe them as faulty. Never accuse a man of impudence, when you can say he has a little too much confidence; never say he is headstrong, when you have such a word as venturesome. Remember that nothing is atrocious, it is

only notorious; that no one is callous, he is only unsusceptible. Remember that no one cheats, he only beguiles; that no one is criminal, he is only illegal; that no one commits a blunder, he is only guilty of an error of judgment. Things that coarse people would call trash, you must speak of as trifles; things that coarser people would call filthy, you must speak of as dingy; things that both would call gaudy, you must speak of as glittering. Never forget that people are not fools or foolish, they are simply simple; that they are not vulgarly fat, but pleasantly adipose; that no one gorges, but only fills himself; that murder is softened into despatch; that lies must always be called fibs, and the man who creates lies must be called a fibber.

This is only general politeness, which you will show to all sexes and all classes; in the case of ladies, you are bound to be even more careful. Let me impress upon you that a woman is never ugly, she is only homely. If she is accused of being forward, you must say she is progressive; if they go further and say she is free and easy, you must alter these words to liberal and unrestricted; and when the poet (I think it is Shakespeare) insists upon giving her the name of frailty, you must alter this offensive word to imperfection. Do all you can to so regulate your speech that no one will notice or care to remember

what you say; and, above all, avoid the abusive language which I am sorry to say is creeping even into once respectable journals. I need do no more than allude to the disgraceful attacks which have been made in *Punch* on that great and good man the Duke of Mudford.* When such an ornament of the vegetable kingdom is held up to unmerited ridicule, we naturally ask what next, and next?—and pause for a reply.

IV.

In addressing people there are many daily blunders which you should strive to avoid. If you are addressing your superiors, you should try to do credit to the Board; if you are addressing your inferiors, you should set them a good example. You should always tone down your adjectives, and place them as close as possible to the nouns they qualify. You should never speak, as house agents do, of an "antique gentleman's residence," but should say a "gentleman's antique residence," showing that the house is old and not the gentleman. The aisle of a church is pronounced "ile," but oil has not by any means the same pronunciation. Always should not

* And may be made again.—ED.

be written "allways," but should always be written always. You should be very careful in the use of negatives. It is not elegant or correct to say, "I never cares not nothing (sometimes mispronounced nuffin) for nobody." If you have to ask for throat lozenges, you call them bronchial troches, and you pronounce the words "bron'ki-al tro'kez." Chough is pronounced "chuff," but cough is pronounced "koff," and borough is pronounced "burrow." We must take things as we find them. Derby is "Darby," Berkeley is "Barkly," and Colquhoun is "Coon." In writing spoonful you only use one l; in writing dunghill you use two. Encore is pronounced "ong-kor," and ennui "on'nwē." Guillotine may easily be confounded with gelatine, unless you are careful; and Bourgeois, if it means a middle-class Frenchman, is pronounced "bougewar;" if it means a certain kind of type, it is pronounced bur-joyce. *Iago* is pronounced "Yah-go," whether the performer is bad or good, and *Jacques* is "Zhak" in French, and "Jakes" in English, except on the stage, where it becomes "Jake-quees." Perspiration should never be pronounced "p*re*spiration," though that is even better than saying "a muck of sweat." Radish, even if it is reddish, should not be pronounced "reddish." Rains, reigns, and reins are easily confounded, if you are not careful, though their different

meanings must be evident to the meanest capacity. A suit of furniture is pronounced sweet, whether the furniture comes from Gillow or Tottenham Court Road, and this shows the folly of importing French words into a language so rich as the English. The use and abuse of the letter H are subjects I could say much upon, but until the authorities have settled the correct pronunciation of hospital, herb, and humour, I prefer to remain silent.

V.

Before taking leave of you and this subject, perhaps you will allow me to say a few words on the virtue of humility. You must not despise your elders who were born in an age when ratepayers were not benevolent, and the rule in matters of education was—"the devil take the hindmost." You must not look with contempt on your father and mother, or your uncles and aunts, because they find a difficulty in aspirating the letter H, in asking for a beefsteak at Boulogne, or in spelling or pronouncing words of more than two syllables. If you correct them when you notice their shortcomings, it must be in the most delicate manner. If you know they are wrong you must not say so, but must gently hint that authorities

differ on certain points, and that the generally received spelling or pronunciation of certain words is so-and-so or so-and-so. You must behave with the utmost politeness to the working classes. You must not order them to work as if they were slaves and you were a slave-driver, but you must ask them if they will kindly oblige you by executing a certain task at their own time and pleasure for a remuneration quite inadequate though generally considered liberal. You must anticipate their weakness for the dinner-hour by requesting them to take it much earlier and prolong it much later. You must be liberal in the matter of beer, and not obstinate in the matter of tobacco, even during the hours of labour. Instead of leaving them to assert their claim to a half-holiday on Saturday and a late arrival on Monday, you should request them not to work after sunset on Friday night until midday on Monday. Leisure is the gift of the gods, and no man should be deprived of it. Do not inquire too curiously how this leisure is utilised. One man may distribute tracts which he does not read; another man may read tracts which he does not distribute. One man may prefer the simple game of skittles to the "elaborate frivolity" of chess; and another man may despise both, and prefer to spend his time and money in increasing the Excise revenue of his country.

Seated, as you are, on a lofty pinnacle, in the upper regions of education, you can afford to look down with charitable tolerance on the weakness of those who were born before you. Their intellect may be equal to yours, but their training is inferior, and it is your own fault if the world is not governed in future by able-minded paupers.

THE SPENDTHRIFT'S GUIDE.

I.

THE art of Money-grubbing has been so much exalted for many years, and has even been raised to the level of a cardinal virtue, under the softened title of "Self-Help," that perhaps it would be well to recognise the existence of the opposite quality, and to publish a few words of advice for the guidance of Spendthrifts. Every man who has money is not born with the talent for spending it well; and, even if he possess this talent, it may be improved by judicious teaching. Let us teach.

Our first lesson shall be on keeping a Yacht. This form of money-spending is simply ridiculous. Not one man in a hundred gets any real enjoyment

out of it, unless enjoyment can be got out of feeling always uncomfortable, if not absolutely ill; and in watching the ruddy faces of an idle crew, who are eating and drinking, and being clothed at your expense.

Our second lesson shall be on keeping Horses. The horse is a noble animal, honest and truthful as a Newfoundland dog, but the same cannot be said of those who deal in him, and look after him. Horse-dealers, stablemen, grooms, and helps are not influenced by the horse's nature, and a "horsey" man generally is not a man to be too much trusted. Those who keep horses spend much money for the profit, and often for the enjoyment, of other people; and out of fifty riders there is probably only one who really understands and enjoys horse-riding, and is not in perpetual fear of breaking his neck, even if he is lucky enough to escape a "cropper."

Locomotion we admit to be necessary, and locomotion is only brought to its highest state of perfection on English Railways. The first rude attempt at luxury and comfort in travelling is the Saloon-Car. Our recommendation to the Spendthrift is to have a private travelling carriage, fitted by the most artistic and expensive upholsterers of the day, provided with a bath-room, sleeping-berths, a wine cellar, a portable kitchen, a drawing-room, a dining-room, a servants'

room, a luggage-box, and any further convenience which highly-paid ingenuity can suggest. This Car, fitted on to the network of railways, and worked on a mileage arrangement with the companies, would form a most agreeable money-spending machine, the invitations to which would be more coveted than any invitations for a cruise in the *Cyclone*. One day at Brighton, the next in the Highlands, and the next on the coast of Cornwall—these are only a few of the enjoyments which such a carriage would bring within the reach of a select number. An Italian cook, a small private band, a barber, an artist, and a descriptive writer ought to form part of the travelling staff, and every care ought to be taken to make the journeys as expensive as possible. If the Spendthrift is not equal to the direction of so much outlay, he should select, as manager, a head-servant from some embarrassed family of distinction. By all means let him avoid the mistake of taking his servants from *millionnaires*, unless he wants a walking embodiment of *Poor Richard's Almanack*.

II.

For the man who has more money than brains—or who, having both brains and money, is disinclined to exercise the first and is willing to spend the second—there is no occupation so costly and attractive as keeping a Theatre. Theatres can be bought, or they can be rented. Buying is preferable. A Theatre that has cost about six thousand pounds to build, with a ground-rent of one hundred pounds a year, can easily be purchased for twenty thousand pounds, with a ground-rent of two hundred pounds a year. This may be considered a good Spendthrift investment. When the purchase is completed it is advisable to call in architects, decorators, and persons of taste, to see how far the building can be rebuilt, and how much money it is possible to spend upon it. The advantage of a Theatre, as distinguished from other property erected under the Building Acts, is that, however well you may do your work, you may be suddenly called upon to do it over again. A fire in a Theatre at Yokohama, stated, but not proved, to have been built without asbestos cement, may inspire the Board of Works and the Lord Chamberlain to demand a strict application of asbestos cement, and the Spendthrift

will then have the pleasure of partially reconstructing his property. Not one of the least attractions of Theatre-keeping to the Spendthrift will be the fact that the State—Imperial and Parochial—will claim about a thousand or twelve hundred pounds a year in rates and taxes for the liberty of carrying on the business of grinning through horse-collars.

While so much money is being lavished upon architects, builders, decorators, beadles, and the Government, it would be wicked not to treat the dramatic profession liberally. The Spendthrift will appoint a "literary adviser," with the salary of an Under-Secretary of State, who will select the most expensive scenery, properties, authors, and actors. The vulgar notion that actors should be selected for a piece, and a piece for actors, and that both should be selected to supply a presumed public demand, should be left to tradesmen and hucksters. Pieces and actors for the Spendthrift's Theatre should be selected for their high prices, and put upon the stage in the name of Art. The lower the receipts, the more should this policy be persisted in, until the Spendthrift's Theatre takes the place of the subsidised playhouses of the Continent. When the Spendthrift is tired of his toy, he can always get a baronetcy by asking for it, and the toy can be generously given to his Acting-Manager. As Acting-Managers never act,

there is little chance of the new proprietor playing *Hamlet*, and in all probability he will sell the place to the Salvation Army. If the Salvation Army buy it, they will pay about two-thirds of its market-value —as part of their Salvation is the Salvation of money —and they will take the credit of having abolished a Sink of Iniquity.

III.

After a little rest from his theatrical extravagance, the Spendthrift should procure an "organ." There are organs of various kinds. There is the tenor voice which Providence, for some mysterious reason, bestows on one man in fifty years, and there is the musical instrument on wheels, which, because it delights and refines the multitude, is called a nuisance. The organ I mean is called a Newspaper. It may not be a newspaper, but it is called a newspaper. The Spendthrift can always buy an organ, because organs are always in the market, but he will be exposed to competition, because purchasers of organs are in the market likewise. No matter how feeble or unsuccessful a newspaper may be, it can always command a few hundreds for its copyright; and the Spendthrift

has only to increase these hundreds to thousands to obtain what he wants without the slightest opposition.

Having purchased his organ, his first task will be to engage his Editor. Editors are very fond of having organs of their own, and of treating proprietors with the utmost contempt. The Spendthrift must be prepared for this, and must only be too delighted to find unlimited capital for the publication of other people's crotchets. The Contributors will be chosen by the Editor, and will own no allegiance to the Spendthrift-Proprietor. He will be allowed to visit his own premises occasionally, and will be supplied with an early copy of his own paper free of charge. If he wishes to insert a paragraph in any number he will ask the Editor's permission, and must not be astonished if he is refused on the ground that he is endangering the policy of an established journal. He will do well to accept his position, and to cultivate a belief in the infallibility of his Editor and Contributors. His Editor, in exchange for capital, will provide him with cut-and-dried opinions on every possible subject. He will not only be told what happened yesterday, but what is going to happen to-morrow. He will act, where it is possible to act, on this cocksure information. He will read his own "Money Article" with trusting faith, and instruct his broker to buy or sell everything according to its directions. He will back

all the horses named as winners by the Sporting Contributor, and buy all the pictures praised by the Fine-Art Critic. By the time his Editor has become a Member of Parliament for an important borough, or been selected by Government for a well-paid Commissionership, the Spendthrift will probably have grown a little tired of owning an "organ."

IV.

To relieve the monotony of spending money for his solitary gratification, the Spendthrift should think how it is best to spend money for the gratification of others. There are various ways of doing this. Dinner-parties, four-horse coaches, diamond rings, bracelets, testimonials, etc., are all, more or less, old-fashioned. Invention and enterprise are as necessary in extravagance as in business. The Spendthrift must look round his native city with an intelligent eye, and see what public want he can supply on a scale that is worthy of his capital. He will not have to look far. He will find nearly four millions of patient stupid people, taxed from the soles of their feet to the roots of their hair, ridden to death by Bumbledom and licensing systems, with far less social liberty than the

despised Russian, living in the greatest city in the world without a single Casino or Music-garden. Casinos and Music-gardens are not the one thing needful, or the breath of life, but they are things that no other great city has consented to do without, and which Englishmen can be trusted with as safely as Germans or Frenchmen.

The Spendthrift will see his opportunity and act upon it. He will buy a mansion and grounds from an embarrassed nobleman (there are plenty about) which he will throw open to the Public free of charge. He will go to several cities on the Continent, where music is not so much a profession as a recreation, and he will select a number of musicians to form an orchestra. He will light his grounds with the Electric Light, if he can find any Electrician not too busy with company-mongering to attend to him, and he will engage a proper staff of Masters of the Ceremonies to conduct the dancing in a spirit worthy of the late Beau Nash and the late Baron Nathan. He will decorate his grounds with statues of the most prominent obstructives on the Meddlevex Bench. Thomas Carlyle has received this indignity, and why not a Meddlevex Magistrate? Our Spendthrift's dances will take place six nights a week, and his band will play every day and night, including Sundays.

He will occasionally be prosecuted. In a country with twenty licensing authorities, and only one fish sauce, he can hardly expect to be free from this amusing annoyance. He will occasionally be fined. He will pay the fines. He will have several lawsuits brought against him. He will defend them, and make arrangements with his capital to carry them on for ten or twenty years. The New Law Courts will make this process a little more expensive, but expense, in this case, is only an amusement. A Lunacy Commissioner will be sent to see him by the Government. He will receive the Commissioner with full musical honours, and pension him off with twice the Government *honorarium*. When he has been proceeded against by every legal power given to the Sacred Jackasses who rule the Kingdom of Fools, it will be found that he has done little more than the Emperor of Austria is doing every day in a portion of the Palace Gardens at Vienna.

V.

Ingenuity in spending or wasting money will grow by what it feeds on, and the Spendthrift will feel a lofty contempt for the poor plodders in outlay who

keep yachts, breed race-horses, and fatten prize cattle. He will aim at a higher mark, and as long as he shoots with golden bullets, will find no difficulty in hitting it.

If there is one thing more than another that can be bought at a certain price in the open market, it is a seat in Parliament. When a seat is bought, it by no means follows that the buyer is obliged to sit in it. He can appoint a deputy. If he can buy one seat he can buy ten; and if he can buy ten he can buy twenty, with the usual trading reduction on taking a quantity. If he can appoint one deputy, he can appoint twenty, and can thus become the sole lessee and manager of a compact Parliamentary party. There is nothing to prevent him calling it the Sixth Party. The Fourth Party is a copyright term, and the right of translation is reserved; and the term Fifth Party is more or less claimed by Messrs. Cowen, Goschen, and Sir Edward Watkin—the three champion gibbers of St. Stephen's.

In arranging his plans he may calculate his expenses to a shilling. An average seat in Parliament costs between four and five thousand pounds sterling, and the cost of keeping it up may vary from three hundred to a thousand a year. Five thousand pounds is a fair sum to pay for each Member for one year's lease, or one hundred thousand for twenty Members.

This will include all charges; even the fees for twenty elections at the Reform Club. The annual allowance to the twenty Members—as in the case of the Irish Party—is a matter of arrangement.

In selecting his members, the Spendthrift need consult no Party and no prejudices. He may keep up appearances by giving every interest an apparent chance, on the distinct understanding that all voting is to be under his sole direction. He can have a "godless" Member, with a good digestion for Mumbo-Jumbo tests, and he can balance this representative with a serious Member—one of the pets of the Reform Club—whose notion of liberty is the liberty of thinking exactly as the serious Member thinks. He can have a Cabman to represent the Cab interest, and an ex-Prizefighter to uphold the principles of peace on earth and good-will amongst men. He can have an unconvicted Member of the criminal classes to watch the legislation which is supposed to restrict and punish the spread of crime; and he can have a Publican to keep an eye on licensing restrictions. He can have an Acrobat to watch all Acts of Parliament limiting the freedom of athletic sports; and he can balance this with a milksop Member who is inclined to place every dangerous crossing under the parental care of Government.

He can have a waspish Member with a head for

figures, who will fill the place so long left vacant by the late Joseph Hume; and he can have several vestrymen well trained to expose the waste and incompetency of Bumbledom; a sonorous speaker against time, who is never at a loss for words and never hampered with ideas; an impecunious lord to take the chair at public meetings; and a well-to-do actor to give a Conservative tone and an appearance of respectability to the whole combination, will make the Sixth Party one of the most complete things in parliamentary organisation. The Spendthrift, in exchange for his money, will become a power in the State, and will rank with Gin, Beer, and Railways in the councils of the nation.

VI.

The most favourite form of money-wasting in England—and probably in other countries—is the brick, stone, and mortar form. There are Spendthrift companies who insist upon building aquariums in places that do not require aquariums, with directors who are more fishy than the fish, and dividends that are suggestive of low water. There are people who build gigantic hotels in places that have no local

population, and no power of attracting visitors; and there are people who build mansions in places that have all the disadvantages of the country, and none of its advantages. There are people who build muddle-lodging-houses that never have been, and never will be, occupied by the classes they were intended to benefit; and there are people who build colleges and hospitals for one purpose, that are persistently devoted to another. Capital has been lavishly wasted in many eccentric shapes, but not to any extent in museums. There is a great field for enterprise in museums. The Spendthrift could hardly do much better with his time and money than invest them in a museum of a perfectly novel type, which he might properly call the Museum of National Disgrace.

England is a great country. There is a tradition that the sun never sets within its dominions. It is a country great in cock-a-doodle-dooism. It clings to "*Rule, Britannia!*" it glories in national debts, and it has an infinite power of taxation. The centre of England is London, which is said to be the richest, as it certainly is the greatest city in the world. Its greatness is shown in a population of four millions; its riches are disgraced by a hundred cases of starvation a year. These cases are not all reported, or, if reported, are disguised under the headings of "priva-

tion," "exposure," "neglect," "heart disease," etc. The reporters are naturally ashamed to tell the truth, and probably the public are glad that they are not compelled to read it. With all our affected love of publicity, there is much that we agree to conceal from ourselves, and from each other.

The Spendthrift will take a tract of land as near the offices of Government as possible. On this he will raise a building regardless of expense, prepared to receive a countless number of statues. The moment any death from starvation occurs, he will obtain a cast of the body, and from this he will raise a life-like representation of the miserable dead, and place it on a pedestal, with the name, age, cause of death, and every other particular. The parish in which the death occurred, the amount of poor-rate levied in that parish, the name of the beadle who refused food at the workhouse gates, the name of the policeman who thought that the dead man or woman was drunk, and every disgraceful act of Bumbledom should be recorded, not in a register, but in large letters on the base of the statue, lighted by the electric light. The Spendthrift should be prepared for a thousand actions for libel a year. The more the merrier. Before the Museum of National Disgrace has been opened for three or four years, the annual cases of "exposure" will have

been sensibly diminished. The space at the Spendthrift's disposal can easily be utilised. A small hall for the statues of persons murdered by murderers never discovered will form a well-filled "Chamber of Horrors" in this much-needed museum.

VII.

If the Spendthrift wishes to hand his name still further down to posterity as a public benefactor, he can do it by setting the law in motion, either offensively or defensively. The law is one of those mighty engines which never moves, either for good or evil, without a plentiful supply of coals and grease. The Spendthrift is in the happy position that he can command any quantity of these necessaries. Let us teach him how to use them.

We may take it for granted that every hour in the day, every day in the year, and every year in the century, some grabber is busy in and about the commons skirting all our great cities, seeing how much land he can possibly steal from the public. We may also take it for granted that many members of the public would oppose these robbers, even to the extent of pulling down buildings and destroying

barriers, if they were free from fear, not of the law, but of the far more dreaded costs of law. Here the Spendthrift, like a Queen's Proctor, may beneficially intervene. We may take it for granted that hundreds of poor struggling people—the traders of the gutter, toiling to gain an honest living, instead of becoming burglars or pickpockets, are daily prosecuted under some old and infamous Act of Parliament for Sunday trading, or are "moved on" by an official demon raised by some Tradesman's Protection Society. Here the Spendthrift may again intervene.

We may take it for granted that scarcely a day passes in those districts of our great cities, where the lower middle-class are compelled to congregate, in which the petty tyranny of the twin monopolies, Gas and Water, is not exercised at the expense of the comparatively helpless. False quantities, bad qualities, dishonest machinery, unbounded capital, and equally unbounded insolence, are on one side; on the other side is nothing but poverty and ignorance, or timidity, the result of poverty. Between these two extremes stands a Government scarecrow, called, probably, a Public Analyst, or a Public Prosecutor, who is about as useful to the poor and humble as a Lord Chancellor or an Archbishop. Here the Spendthrift may profitably intervene.

We may take it for granted that the landlord of

these settlements—the ostensible lord of a thousand semi-detached villas—would be a little less exacting in the matter of rent, and a little more honest in the matter of roofing and drain-pipes, if he had the wholesome fear of Bullion before his eyes. Here the Spendthrift may usefully intervene.

We may take it for granted that the wholesale adulterator—whether he takes the form of the stage-rustic milkman or the greasy and sanctimonious butterman, would be far more virtuous under a fear of Bullion than he is under a fear of future punishment. The Spendthrift has a mission. He has the opportunity of raising filthy lucre from the sty in which it usually wallows, and making it a power for good as great as Christianity.

VIII.

After doing so much for the benefit and gratification of his fellow-creatures, the Spendthrift is quite entitled to do something for the gratification of himself, without considering public opinion, or the greatest happiness of the greatest number. One of the most disagreeable results of possessing property

is the necessity of making a will, which brings you face to face with the word *finis*, and compels you to please nobody, while trying to please everybody. The best way out of this difficulty is to please yourself. In disposing of his wealth, the Spendthrift will select two or more persons in different grades of life, who must be utter strangers to himself, and to each other. He will select a king or queen, a landed proprietor, and a capitalist. The king or queen must not be poor or insignificant, the landed proprietor must be the absolute lord of countless acres, and the capitalist must be the owner of many millions sterling. In selecting these representatives of three classes, the Spendthrift must be careful that the landed proprietor and the capitalist, at least, have never disgraced themselves or their property by any act of public or private generosity. The king or queen may be allowed a little latitude in this respect, on account of their position, which compels them to do many things which they could avoid as private individuals; but the qualification of the two others must be strictly adhered to. Having made the necessary inquiries, the Spendthrift will divide his wealth in the following fashion. He will give his land to the landed proprietor; he will give his cash, securities, and funded property to the capitalist; and he will give his jewels, pictures, houses, statues, and other

valuables to the king or queen. He will reserve just enough money to pay for his modest funeral, and to write over his grave the following inscription :—

He spent not wisely, but too well.

A SABBATARIAN'S DIARY.

Sunday, October 29.—Went to church, and found the choir very imperfect. Made a note to write to the Rector about a new tenor that I heard at a proprietary chapel.

Went to the Fogey Club and had lunch. Had occasion to complain of the quality of the claret. Wrote several letters to the *Daily Waterbutt* in favour of strict Sabbath observance—the closing of public-houses, the stoppage of bands in the Park, the cessation of railway, postal, and telegraph service, etc. Read the money article in the *Observer*, and wrote to my Banker to buy Egyptians, Turks, and other Infidel Stocks at present low quotations. Wrote to my Member of Parliament to vote against the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh, on pain of losing my vote and interest at the next election.

Dined at home, because the Sunday dinners at the Fogey Club are really too unbearable. Dressed, and went to an evening party at Baron Midas's. Several royal personages were present, and, in their company, I enjoyed a very clever performance by Madame Camembert, the French actress, and her Company. Fancy I heard somebody say that the piece had been refused a public licence. Glad that we have officials who know their duty, and do it. One was present at this party. Found a difficulty in getting a cab when I left the house. Made a note to complain to the Home Office of the disgraceful way in which the public are neglected by Cabmen.

THE OVERSEER'S STORY.

I'M an Overseer. My name is Jobbins, Vestryman, Overseer, Chairman of the Assessment Committee in the parish of St. Horse-leach-in-the-East, and a member—I may say a very active member—of the Conglomerated Board of Works.

I got my nose into parochial business, and where my nose went my body soon followed. I soon mastered the theory and practice of parochial politics. I was rewarded by being made a Local Pole-Tax Commissioner. From this moment my building transactions increased in the most marvellous manner. I was sent to represent my District at the Conglomerated Board of Works. I soon understood my colleagues, and they understood me. I had many friends who bought land, leaseholds, freeholds, shops, and houses. It was curious that these

places were always wanted by the Conglomerated Board for Babylonian Improvements.' Not wishing to stand across the path of progress, they sold their property to the public, and bought other property. The same result followed. They were still in the path of progress.

I should probably have done wisely if I had merely acted as looker-on at these transactions, but my charity carried me away. The line of the Mammoth Thoroughfare required an opening right across a particular street, and the centre of the line was occupied by a large old lop-sided house which was in the possession of a fat, good-humoured Italian, named Sparghetti, who devoted the basement to the manufacture and sale of penny ices. Sparghetti's stock-in-trade was not imposing. A few glasses, a few lemons, a rusty copper, and some cracked marble tables. Even these were not his own, but heavily rented from a hungry-looking German who dealt in old clothes, fried fish, oranges, money-lending, and cheap jewellery. I quietly established myself as Sparghetti's patron, much to the disgust of the German. I did the house up in a showy manner, turned a small waxwork exhibition out of the first-floor, filled the rooms with packing-cases and a few boxes of macaroni, and put up a substantial crane outside the building. This gave us a wholesale look.

Some old account-books, a small counting-house, and other signs of trade prepared us decently for our heavy claim for compensation.

We sent it in, backed by figures and the testimony of experts, and large as it was, we should have got it if it had not been for the waspish German and a new local journal called *The Houndsditch Nettle.* The waspish German supplied what he was pleased to call "facts," and the *Nettle* served them up with additions and comments. I was compelled to support the *Nettle* and vote against myself. The compensation was reduced to a ridiculous sum, just sufficient to pay me for the alteration of the premises, and leaving a balance of about ten pounds, which I handed to the now houseless Sparghetti. The houseless Sparghetti would have been quite content with this sum, if his ear had not been poisoned by the waspish and revengeful German. He was persuaded that he had been swindled, and that his Italian honour demanded vengeance. He began to dog my footsteps; he glared at me from doorways; he muttered threats in a language I could not understand. If I entered an omnibus, he followed me; if I tried a river steamboat or the Underground Railway, he was still my companion. I was afraid to claim the protection of the police. I could hardly appear in court against him. I thought to evade him by trying a foreign tour, and

purchased one of Cook's Circular Tickets to go anywhere and everywhere—but I was mistaken. He turned up as a courier or interpreter, and was still near me. A fortunate accident at last came to my relief. His passport was out of order, and at the top of the Alps he was not allowed to descend into his native country. He was sent down again into France to get his proper credentials; and here I am, a warning to Vestrymen who try to deal liberally with ignorant foreigners.

FREE AND MERRY ENGLAND.

AN Englishman, theoretically, is the freest citizen under the sun; but practically he is the slave of the Licensing System. The tax-collector treats him as a full-grown man; the Licensing System treats him as a sucking child. He may pass his days in filling up income-tax papers, or appealing against excessive rates, but his evenings are regulated by an iron rule that would not be tolerated for an hour in St. Petersburg or Siberia.

If he goes to any music-hall he must not see a play, although the proprietor is willing to give him one, and yet both he and the proprietor are twitted with the vulgarity of the entertainment provided. If he goes to one music-hall he may see dancing—dancing, of course, upon the stage; if he goes to

another music-hall, in another part of the town, he is forbidden to see dancing.

If he tries to find a place where the audience dance together, as they do in every Continental city, he discovers that it is either closed by Act of Parliament, or sold to a howling crew of Salvationists.

If he goes to a theatre he must not smoke, although the proprietor is willing, and he must not drink without putting his head in a cupboard.

If he defers his smoking and drinking until after the theatre, and wishes to add a little supper, he is in another difficulty. He may have filled up his income-tax papers in the afternoon, for the third time, and paid his rates and taxes like a Christian, but, though he lives in a city of four millions of people—the largest city in the world—he cannot find a single tavern open where he would care to take his wife or his grandmother. He finds a few hybrid "restaurants," that are made rowdy by Act of Parliament, with flushed and perspiring crowds, and more flushed and perspiring waiters, and clocks that have got a full fifteen minutes' start into eternity. He scrambles for what he can get, while the waiter looks at his watch, and, before he has half eaten his supper, he is asked for the money and turned into the street, because no one must eat or drink after half-past

twelve in merry England. He walks through an hysterical crowd, who probably pay their footing to certain representatives of authority for the use of the pavement, and sees more debauchery in ten minutes in the open London streets than he could find in all Europe in a twelvemonth.

He goes home to bed like a good little citizen, and finds half-a-dozen rate and tax papers to fill up or attend to in the morning.

RUSSIA.

THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES.

I.

WHEN you travel in Russia you are supposed to leave Western civilisation behind you, and so you do. You leave the Channel-boat, a vessel which a cynical writer said was constructed to diminish the distance between pitch-and-toss and manslaughter; you leave such a triumph of French ingenuity as Calais Station, which is like a railway terminus of the Middle Ages; you leave such a German Bedlam of lost, stolen, mislaid, Custom-House-worried, and useless travelling lumber-luggage as Cologne; and you leave the ill-paved, overgrown village of Berlin, across which for several miles you have to be bumped in a hack-cab in order to catch your northern train by the skin of your teeth. For two days and a night after leaving Cologne you pass through a

country that is like slices of swampy Essex laid between slices of smoky Lancashire, until you reach the frontier of Russia, or rather another part of the stolen and divided kingdom of Poland. Here the passport and Custom-House system is a reality and not a sham, and you feel like a criminal as you stand at a bar and watch a small army of inquisitors examining your "papers." A member of the Secret Police probably walks round you on the platform, or accompanies you in the train to St. Petersburg. There are few or no newspapers on the bookstalls, as most of them have been suspended, but there are plenty of naughty French novels. The stalls, however, are open at all hours of the night, which is better than the nine to six arrangement in England.

When you leave Western civilisation behind you, you find other changes. The refreshment-stations are like good foreign hotels, and the waiters meet you in clean, full evening dress, and serve you in white gloves. There is no bustle and no hurry. The train travels at the express rate of from fifteen to twenty-five miles an hour. There are few junctions, and no cross traffic. You seem to pass no trains, and no trains seem to pass you. A child might toddle across the line in safety. No one perspires; no one seems flurried. The carriages

are divided into little rooms for two or more persons, and there is every accommodation for sleeping. It is only incurably dirty travellers like myself, who go round the world with a woollen shirt and two paper collars, who are not as presentable on a platform after forty-eight hours in a train as they would be at a Flower Show. It is hardly fair, perhaps, to call it a train; it is more like a travelling monastery. The bells at the Stations make the faintest sounds, being a combination of the English muffin-bell and the Belgian chimes. They seem to ring you drowsily to a meditative service, and not to a journey. You look calmly out of the window, and have ample time to study the country. You see the peasant proprietor tilling his ground, and raising patches of productive agriculture amidst acres of bog-land and fir-forest. Some of the low-roofed wooden villages are like collections of Indian wigwams. There is no excuse for dilapidated walls and roofs in a country where plenty of wood can be had for nothing; but, such as they are, they are not as bad as the turf huts in the West of Ireland. It is the old story—drink. A revenue as large as that of England is drawn even more largely from spirits. Russian financiers are not the wisest people in the world; they eat their candle at both ends.

II.

There are two advantages in arriving at St. Petersburg. Though you have been three nights and three days in the train, and are lucky if you escape an extra day, according to the calendar you are twelve days younger than when you left England, and according to the sun you have always got two hours' start of your friends in London. A telegram sent to you on the 13th of August at eleven in the morning, reaches your hands about 10 A.M. on the 1st of August. Wake up, old England!

St. Petersburg is as mixed as a salad. Take a slice of the Thames about Rotherhithe and Deptford, a little bit of Hull, a small piece of Havre, a dash of Munich and Berlin, a small piece of Venice and a larger piece of Rotterdam, a few back streets from a dull German town like Crefeld, mix these with Tottenham Court Road, and you get something like St. Petersburg. The shopkeepers in some parts of the City are more like showmen than shopkeepers. They stand at their doors with their "young men" to tempt you in, and in all parts of the City they plaster their outward walls with pictorial emblems of their trade. The river is magnificent, and the

quays are lined with palaces. The City is always on the quay-*vive.* Obvious jokes are made at the expense of the river. It is called the *Neva.* One sample will suffice — "It is *Neva* too late to mend," generally said when the ice is breaking up, etc.

The principal street, the "Novskoi Perspective," is like Whitechapel and the Mile-End Road giving a grand imitation of Regent Street. It is the fashionable afternoon resort for carriages and pedestrians; and as Russia is an autocratic iron and tyrannical, and not a Liberal and Bumble Government, a penny tramway runs along the whole middle of the road.

The roads generally are inlaid with round stones, varying in size from a potato to a quartern loaf. They have made walking a lost art in St. Petersburg. Everybody jolts along in Droskys. A Drosky is a low "one-horse shay," about the size of a child's perambulator. It is built to carry one, and licensed to carry two. Its shafts are like the parallel lines defined in Euclid, with this difference, they stretch to infinity, and nearly meet. The horse has a high triumphal arch over his neck, which either keeps the shafts asunder, or brings them together—it is difficult to say which. The horses are strong, well-fed, and go. The London "crawler" is unknown. The

driver is dressed in a Jewish gabardine, and wears something like a Spanish Inquisitor's hat. The gabardine is covered with and covers the dirt of ages. He sits up far above his fare on a kind of perch, and drives like a London costermonger. Riders in Droskys in St. Petersburg will do well to see that they have no loose money in their pockets, and no loose teeth in their heads, that their shoes are tightly tied, and their hats well fixed on their heads. I need say no more. People who think they can improve the St. Petersburg Drosky and roads, may save themselves a deal of trouble. Nature has otherwise provided. For eight months in the year a velvet-pile carpet is laid down, called snow, and on this the Petersburgers make themselves very comfortable in sledges.

The Russian language is said to be difficult, and the alphabet rather favours this statement. If you take the English language, turn some of the letters hind part before, and turn a number of others upside down, if you settle that the rest of the letters which you leave alone shall stand for something precisely opposite to what they do in England, and if you mix these with a few extra signs which resemble Greek, you will get something like the Russian alphabet.

The eating is peculiar. A real dinner *à la Russe* consists of two tasting orders, and a deranged

English feed. Tasting order Number One takes you to a side-table, where you have the liberty of trying samples of nearly everything sold in an English Italian warehouse. Caviare, smoked salmon, and raw herring, are only three things out of twenty. Tasting order Number Two keeps you at the same table, and gives you liberty to taste nearly every spirit and liquor known in Europe and Asia. After that comes the dinner, where roast beef follows soup, and fish follows roast beef. The soup is good and a dinner in itself.

At the *Cafés* you drink weak tea, served in a tumbler with no milk, and a slice of lemon. A superficial English traveller might see it at a distance and think it was rum and water, or decide on closer observation that there are no tea-cups in Russia. The benighted Russians use tumblers, because glass keeps the tea hot for an hour.

Russia being a despotic country, the Russians are treated like full-grown responsible beings. They have the fullest liberty to do as they like on Sunday, and to sit in their taverns and tea-houses every night, including Sunday, to the hour they fix themselves, and not the hour fixed by Liberal Bumbledom. Music-gardens, concert-rooms, and theatres are open on Sunday, and so are churches. The churches are full, not of curate-worshippers and hysterical women,

but of men. Every street has its shrine, and every house its *Icon.* The commonest labourer says his prayers as he passes these images. Russia being a semi-barbarous country, the churches have no pews. The congregation stand up in one mixed mass, and this liberty, equality, and fraternity is noticeable in much of the social life of a great Russian city. The English have much to be thankful for.

III.

A right line is defined as a line which lies evenly between its points, and this definition applies to the railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow. It was made by one Ruler with another. The Emperor Nicholas took a ruler and ruled a straight line, and this is the iron road from the old capital to the new one.

I use the term "railway" advisedly. Strictly speaking, Russia has no railways, and is content with tramways. The carriages communicate with each other by means of a narrow passage, and first, second, and third-class passengers can and do use this moving thoroughfare—but Russia is a despotic country. There is nothing to prevent a stupid,

drunken, or half-sleepy passenger walking out of a train in the middle of the night. Children travel freely, and most mothers are accompanied by babies in arms. You enter a train on Friday in the middle of the night, and make yourself comfortable, with the full knowledge that you will not leave it till the following Monday or Tuesday. Every five miles—more or less—there is a tea and corn-brandy Station; every ten miles there is a steak and potato Station; and every twenty miles there is a breakfast, dinner, or supper Station. The Russians are fond of "snacks" and devoted to meals. The waits vary from five minutes to three-quarters of an hour. The slow speed is accounted for by the bad construction of the tramways, and the bad construction is attributed to official peculation. Russia has many enemies, who rob her first and abuse her afterwards. Every Russian appears to travel with a bundle of bedding and two teapots. They pass their time in making tea and drinking it, getting the hot water at the Stations, and using one of the teapots as an urn or kettle. They are not burdened, like the English, with mountains of luggage, duly labelled and duly lost. They have a wonderful power of sleep, and a natural horror of open windows. When in the hot summer you see the high wooden railings being erected along the lines to protect the train

from the winter snow-drifts, you can account for this prejudice against the Englishman's air-bath.

Like most cities at which you arrive by railway, the first view of Moscow is disappointing. The house-tops of Bermondsey must often have chilled the foreign traveller just entering London from the Continent. The Moscow roads are like English sand-pits and stone-quarries, and the houses like wooden bungalows. It is not till you get to the outer or second wall of the citadel that you realise the strange wild character of the place. Though up to your neck in Asiatic filth and dirt, you are astonished to find a city that has obstinately refused to be Frenchified or Germanised. Amidst amber and crimson walls, sea-green roofs, gold and silver cupolas like gilded inverted balloons, jewelled shrines, and gaudy images, you turn your eyes to the right or left down narrow lanes, and see a surging mass of Jews, Russians, Tartars, Poles, Cossacks, Circassians, and Finns haggling violently over the most tattered remnants of human clothing. The Jews are in the majority, and it is not uncharitable to suppose that the dealers are accompanied by hosts of those small, faithful, but troublesome parasites who were let into the ark by Noah in a moment of mistaken kindness. Covered alleys of dark arches—the "bazaars" of the East—filled with merchandise of all kinds, run off the

chief thoroughfares, where the merchants make their calculations by the aid of the *abacus*. The whole picture is a curious mixture of Petticoat Lane, Houndsditch, and an Eastern spectacle at a great theatre in London or Paris. The shops, like the shops in St. Petersburg, are covered with pictorial emblems of trade, presumably for people who are not strong in the art of reading. Pigeons, a sacred bird in Russia, cover the roads and pavements, saunter under the carriages, or stroll into the shops. Occasionally a drunken Russian workman is driven by in a drosky, lying like a bundle on the floor of the vehicle, and exciting the contempt of the Tartars and Orientals.

The gilt of the Moscow gingerbread, however, is found in its churches. Outside the chief gate of the Kremlin, in a sandy plain, stands an extraordinary Temple, called St. Basil, but which, with more justice, might be called St. Nightmare. Many stories are told about the architect of this building. He is said to have built it under the orders of Ivan the Terrible, to have made no two parts alike, and to have had his eyes put out after the work was done, so that he could never bless the Muscovite or any other world with another copy. The colours, as in all Russian decoration, are taken wholesale from the signboard of an oil and colourman. The design must have come

to the architect after a surfeit of musk-melon, water-melon, cabbage-soup, and beefsteak, garnished with potatoes, beans, carrots, and cauliflowers—a favourite dish in Russia. It suggests sweet-stuff, fruit, vegetables, and indigestion, and stands a shining example of Byzantine gone mad.

Very different is the view from the grand terrace of the Kremlin. Imagine yourself standing on the towers of Windsor Castle, with a light and brilliant city beneath your feet, backed by wooded hills that would not disgrace England. Thousands of cupolas, domes, and spires are spread before you in a circle, some shining with gold, others with silver, some blue, some green, some red, some pink, and some studded with stars.

Bright crescents surmounted by bright crosses spring from the domes, and between them and around them lies the forest of sloping sea-green roofs which cover the city of Moscow. You forget all about Hounds-ditch, Petticoat Lane merchandise, vermin, sand-pit roads, stone-quarries, and hucksters, and dream that the Russians have not only seized Constantinople, but have brought it bodily into the centre of their gigantic country.

IV.

Though Nishni-Novgorod lies a little off the road from Moscow to Central Asia, it is necessary to visit it for the sake of its annual summer fair. This is a combination of Lower Thames Street, the London Docks, the New Cattle Market, the Lowther Arcade, a Chinese town in which there are few or no Chinese, half the Manchester warehouses of Wood Street and Friday Street, and half the hardware stores of Cannon Street and Queen Victoria Street, compressed into acres of low arches. Everything can be got here from a muslin to a grindstone. Even tombstones are not forgotten. The fair is principally built or arranged on a dismal swamp on the banks of the Volga, and has been the great chosen market where the East and West have met for centuries. Here trade, civilisation, and barbarism have acted and re-acted upon each other ages before International Exhibitions were discovered or invented.

The largest and noisiest booth in the fair is the Exchange or Bourse, built of wood, and resembling Richardson's Theatre at old Smithfield. Near it is the Labour Market, where hundreds of shock-headed Russians in coloured shirts and rope shoes are waiting to be hired as porters. The roads—or what,

by courtesy, are called roads—and the lumpy footways, are covered with merchandise and traffic. The long wooden bridge over the Volga, which unites the town and fair, is as much filled with low pole-spring loaded waggons and hurrying droskys as Cheapside is filled with carts, cabs, omnibuses, and foot passengers in the middle of the day. The river is covered with barges, bringing tea from China, silks from Persia, and iron from Siberia. The wharves and banks are smothered with the alluvial deposits of trade, until the great cathedral which stands in the swamp appears to be merely the crowning point of a mountain of packing-cases.

In the interior of the fair the camp-followers of commerce spread their powerful attractions before the polyglots. Shows of a type which were once the glory of "Old Bartlemy" are supported by pot-houses, in which the coarse joys and clumsy delights of Ratcliffe Highway are imitated with more than Chinese fidelity. String bands, brass bands, and Russian choristers invite the thirsty soul to be more thirsty, while at one or two of the better *cafés* those pampered impostors, the *Tsigani*, or gypsies, condescend to sing a few national songs in a discordant key for a handsome consideration. The commercial energy which brings together half-a-million of buyers and sellers, and partially succeeds in overcoming

Russian indolence and Eastern composure, only lasts for a few weeks in the brief but pleasant Russian summer. In the winter what is left of the busy fair is a howling wilderness, and in the spring the frozen river melts and overflows its banks, and the low huts, sheds, and arches, are turned once more into a dismal swamp—the home of screeching birds and slimy sterlets.

V.

The Volga river in length and breadth is the finest in Europe, but it is not a tourist's river. You can float or steam down it for two or three thousand miles, if you are satisfied with sandbanks and slopes, which scarcely rise to the dignity of hills. A Volga steamboat is a large and comfortable vessel, with a dining-saloon, sleeping cabins, a *table d'hôte*, and an upper and lower deck. The hind part of the boat is devoted to second and third class passengers, and the latter lie upon the lower deck in one closely packed heap, consisting of men, women, children, baskets, bedding, and tea-urns. Small rough seats and tables are fixed at the sides near the portholes, on which the men drink tea, eat vegetable soup, and play at cards. Persians, Jews, Russians, Circassians,

Tartars, merchants, peasants, and others, form the living cargo, and the children amuse themselves by climbing to the highest peak of bedding from which they can command a view of the engine-room. When they are tired of this they swarm on to the upper deck, and little bare-legged, bare-footed Tartar and Russian urchins dance freely over the sacred limits which separate the first from the lower class passengers. Russia, as I have said before, is a despotic country, and the English, as I have said before, have much to be thankful for. Travelling in Russia is a family ceremony. The activity of the children is fortunately not shared by the parents, who are kept quiet by that wonderful power of sleep which is a leading national characteristic.

In two days from Nishni you reach Samara, the headquarters of Russian corn and the Æsthetic sunflower. The Russians do not worship the sunflower, like a certain sect in England; they grow it for seed, and nothing more. A Samara inhabitant will speculate as a grower of sunflowers in no higher spirit than a love for filthy lucre.

The wharves at Samara would be a disgrace to Khiva. A sloping desert of sand, mixed with decayed vegetable matter, and all kinds of muck, half-covered with wooden sheds in every stage of ruin that would hardly shelter a decent English pig, is all Samara

has to show for its river-side market. Each stall-keeper has a family, who roll in the dust, and look on while the Samarese buy fruit, nuts, or musk-melons. And yet Samara is a wealthy town with ninety thousand inhabitants, and Russia has a great engineer like Todleben, and more than a million of soldiers doing worse than nothing!

A short distance outside Samara, on the road to Orenbourg, is a small ditch, which the Empress Catherine II., commonly called the Great Catherine, decided was the boundary between European Russia and Asia. Catherine was a great Empress, but a very small geographer.

VI.

To get from Samara to the real Asiatic boundary —the Ural River, just outside Orenbourg, was a long journey in Catherine's day, and is not made much shorter by the existing railway. The trains that run through this reclaimed Steppe country are of the slow and sure order, and are easily raced by jocular Tartars on horseback. The Tartar may catch a train, but the train can hardly catch a Tartar.

Orenbourg is unmistakably a border town, half Russian and half Oriental. Camels stalk with dignity

across its sandy plains, and minarets relieve the monotony of domes and pear-shaped cupolas amongst its temples. Open truck omnibuses, like the Irish Bianconi cars, drive to and from the fair held across the Ural River outside the walls, and these cars are filled with Khivans, Bokharans, Khirghese, Bashkirs, Serfs, Khokans, Turcomans, Circassians, Cossacks, Russians, and Jews. The fair or market is held in a "Bazaar" on the Asiatic Steppe or Prairie. This Bazaar is a large square enclosure, like a huge provincial cattle-market, surrounded by rows of dark arches filled with Bokharan carpets, and other Eastern produce, which have been brought for thousands of miles across the Steppes by caravans of bullocks and camels. These arches are like the potato caverns in Covent Garden Market, and as you walk round the rough arcade which is built in front of them as a protection from sun and rain, and peer into their gloomy depths, you see the dusky faces of men who have hardly yet exchanged the calling of brigands for that of merchants. They will sell you a carpet or cut your throat with equal pleasure. In the open yard which forms the centre of the market, standing ankle-deep in animal refuse, are horses, mares, donkeys, dromedaries, and camels. The excitement of their motley owners almost equals that of twenty-franc speculators on the Paris Bourse, and business is conducted by a

violent clapping of hands. If the veiled Kherghese women riding on camels behind their hooded husbands did not make you feel that you have left Europe behind you, you would soon be brought face to face with the fact outside the fair. On your road to the land of Mazeppa, across the balmy Steppes, you pass through a Khirghese camp—a settlement of beehive-looking tents, that are pitched upon the black earth and virgin grass. The butcher's shop stands by the roadside—the wheel track across the prairie. It consists of a wooden frame, not unlike a square gallows, from which bleeding pieces of sheep and horseflesh, covered with flies, hang roasting in the burning sun.

As you drive along the scented plains of Central Asia, with millions of sloping, treeless, untilled acres before you stretching to the walls of China or the doors of India, you wonder why the rich black virgin soil has never been cultivated. This is not the only thing that astonishes you while travelling through European Russia to Russian Asia. You wonder why a Russian farmer lives in a hut built of wood and mud in undrained fields on one side of a frontier, while a German farmer contrives to create a neat brick house and a trim-looking farm on the other.

The journey into the Steppes, even for fifty or a hundred miles, is a new sensation in more senses

than one. A ride in a Tarantass is a novelty. A Tarantass is a large basket cradle, placed upon a frame of poles—a favourite Russian substitute for springs, and fixed upon four wheels. The cradle is half filled with rugs, and on these rugs you lie as comfortably as you can. Like certain physic, you are well shaken before you are taken. Another novelty is to see the bones of dead camels and horses lying by the roadside, or the long melancholy line of a camel-caravan passing slowly on its way to the Orenbourg fair. The smooth undulating plains stretch in every direction as far as the eye can reach. The air is fresh and soft, and comes to you touched with the scent of wild thyme. There is a soothing calm, such as you only feel when alone in the middle of Exmoor or Salisbury Plain.

VII.

After driving about forty miles across the Steppes you come to the place where the Mazeppa family have settled down as buyers, sellers, and breeders of horses. The settlement, in fine language, might be called an *oasis*. A bungalow residence, well furnished with Russian luxuries; a farmyard suggestive of

Noah's Ark; a river for boating; a cook who understands sauces; a well-arranged stable containing noble specimens of the best English, Russian, and Turcoman horses; a farm of many acres; three or four hundred Tartar and Russian servants; a drove of a thousand wild horses; and about a hundred thousand acres of rich pasture land, constitute the oasis. Everything is charming except the cabbage-pie at luncheon. In Russia it is advisable to draw the line at cabbage-pie. Like history, it repeats itself. The bed-rooms are as full of flies as the inside of a sugar-cask. Russian servants of the confidential class will amuse the ignorant traveller. While waiting at table they laugh loudly at every joke, and behave like a mixture of Figaro and Pierrot.

About ten miles in the Asiatic Steppe beyond the Mazeppa oasis, is the settlement of a rich Khirghese chieftain, perhaps one of the very largest horse-dealers in this very horsey country. His tents lie at the foot of some slopes or hills that are rather suggestive of Dorsetshire. He has his own mosque on the estate, his own priest, and two imitation Russian houses, which he has had built from his own design. Between them is an elaborate Russian gateway, which leads to nowhere. He is a "travelled" man, and has been to Khiva, Bokhara, Afghanistan, Constantinople, and Mecca. He advances to receive you at the head of

his household, accompanied by his priest, who is a rather artful-looking Tartar. He is a fat, jolly little man, and, like most of the Khirghese, has a Chinese type of face. He conducts you to one of the houses. You enter a room which has very little furniture beyond quotations from the Koran over the door and Turcoman carpets on the floor. You seat yourself on the carpet in the centre of the room, your host sits in front of you, as if he were kneeling, and you are served with almonds, dried raisins, and dates from Bokhara, and tea which has been brought overland from China. After this you are escorted into the grounds, where several hundred Khirghese retainers are waiting to look at you. To amuse these cheerful Nomads you mount and ride a camel, and feel as if you were sitting astride on a moving haystack. In return, to amuse you, a drove of six or seven hundred wild horses, out of your host's many thousands, are driven over the slopes by Tartar shepherds, who ride like the Arabs of the Desert. They carry long lassos in their hands, tied to sticks like fishing rods or lances. The hawks and eagles fly over your head, and the ground is strewn with the bones of dead wolves and horses. Dogs that are only one remove from wolves prowl over this Golgotha, and feed on what they can find, undisturbed by the stampede around them. A wild horse is selected from the

drove, and, after an exciting chase, is caught in the lasso. A bit is slipped into his mouth, and a Khirghese rough-rider springs on his bare back. The horse kicks, fights, bites, and throws himself on the ground, but the rider is equal to the occasion. He falls astride the horse, and rises when he rises. A few more struggles, and the half-mastered animal gallops for a mile up the Steppe, and is ridden down again in a few minutes as much "broken in" as a Khirghese requires.

This novel spectacle over, the shepherds drive their horses away into space, and as a great favour you are allowed to visit one of your host's wives in one of the beehive-looking tents. These tents are built of reeds and felt, and are warm in winter and cool in summer. All the property of the tenter is arranged in boxes round the side of the tent, and the floor is covered with carpets. A little polite conversation through an interpreter with the lady of the tent is all that is required, and after this you are conducted back to one of the houses to dinner. A feast of retainers is being held on the ground outside the houses, on the edge of the Golgotha. The food they are gnawing looks strange and is strange. They are *hippophagi*. A Tartar child is struggling with a bony fragment of a horse nearly as large as itself. With an appetite rather diminished you enter the

house and sit again on the Bokharan carpet. A brass dish is brought in, on which is a long stringy piece of baked horse, and a large greasy yellow sausage, also horse. Fingers were made before forks, and your host tears the meat with his hands, and places pieces on your brass platter. You explain that you are not very well, and a lump of cold mutton is handed to you to comfort you. Bowls of a thin greyish-blue fluid are then brought in, which looks like milk-and-water, and tastes like sour butter-milk. This is *Koumiss*, or fermented mares' milk, the drink of the Tartars for ages. If only half that is said of this mysterious fluid is true, it is worth even going through a feast of horseflesh to taste it. If Europe can only be brought to *Koumiss*, or *Koumiss* to Europe, consumption will only exist as a dreaded name of the past, and thousands of poor children pining in Foundling Hospitals, or the hands of hired nurses, will no longer miss the fostering care of mothers. In the name of the Prophet, *Koumiss!*

SPAIN.

THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES.

I.

SPAIN is one of those countries in which too many Cooks have not succeeded in spoiling the tours. The British tourist is a black swan in Spain, and a white elephant in Africa. The reason is not far to seek. He has been systematically frightened. They tell him garlic will be his food, and brigands his companions. They tell him that while he is merely robbed in Italy, he will be skinned alive in Andalusia. They tell him while soap is made in Castile, it is as scarce as oysters in Whitstable, or sausages in Epping. They tell him that the Spaniards stick at everything and everybody, except trifles. They tell him that while in hospitable countries a knife and fork are always waiting for

the traveller, in Spain it is the knife without the fork. They ask him if he can live on black bread and rancid oil, and drink wine which no chemist would sell as physic without a shudder. They tell him, in fact, the pretty stories that are usually told to the Marines, and they succeed in keeping his valuable custom for Italy, France, and Germany.

When the adventurous traveller disregards these warnings, and thinks and acts for himself, he is surprised to find that a journey to Madrid is much like a journey to any other Continental capital. He has to put up with slow trains, and travel night after night—the usual penalty of Continental travelling—but he is not crammed in close carriages, as in France, nor compelled to journey like a Prince or an Englishman, as in Germany. He gets travelling comforts at moderate prices, and he finds the "sleeping car" an accepted institution. As he draws within fifty or sixty miles of Madrid, he finds himself in a wild country, that looks like a gigantic stone-yard capable of employing all the paupers of Europe. He crosses a boundless desert of granite filled with fantastic stone demons that grin like rough-and-ready Sphinxes at the passing passenger. He wonders if this can be the place which is known to explorers as Stony Stratford.

As he nears Madrid, the stone desert changes to a sandy prairie, in which the houses are planted. The outskirts of the City look like patches of Notting Hill and Bayswater dropped, here and there, in a Spanish Sahara. The new houses are strangely English, and strangely modern. The city itself is like a small Brussels, without the Flemish antiquities, and the oldest parts of the place have a decided aspect of the day before yesterday. With the most wonderful history in the world enshrined in books, not one page of this is stamped upon the buildings. Paris, which has conquered so many cities, has conquered Madrid, as one day it will conquer London, with or without the Channel Tunnel. The "pot" and the "chimney-pot" hat are on the heads of the men, though the mantilla still clings to a few of the heads of the women. The cloak has not been altogether superseded by the overcoat, but it harmonises very badly with the imported head-covering. Anything more absurd than a Spanish cloak and a London tall hat has yet to be discovered amongst the numerous eccentricities of costume.

II.

If the Peninsular War had had a different termination, Madrid could hardly be more Frenchified than it is. From the cooking in the hotels to the afternoon drive in the Prado, everything goes to make a little Paris. An exception may be made to the Prado. While it imitates Paris, it excels it. The carriages are more numerous and better appointed than they are in the Bois de Boulogne.

Whether the Spaniard was born with a cigarette in his lips may be open to discussion, but it is certain that he lives and dies with one. In the churches he barely leaves it outside the sacred doors.

The staple product of Spain, next to sherry, appears to be oranges, and the principal occupation appears to be sucking oranges.

At one time—many years ago—the staple production was pictures. The noted firm of Murillo & Co. were the great manufacturers of Holy Families, wholesale, retail, and for exportation, and it requires more than the eye of an expert to say where the master's hand ends and the pupil's begins.

A Spaniard has no sense of the value of time. One day is to him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. It is the country of the aloe, and

the aloe, according to tradition, blooms once in a century. This plant grows in great luxuriance along the sides of the railway to Seville. Its example appears to affect the railway service. An express train is a train that runs only three times a week, at the wonderful speed of fifteen to eighteen miles an hour. The ordinary trains give plenty of time for the passengers to watch the blooming of the aloe.

If the Spaniards are not more bloodthirsty than any other nation, they take much pains to make you believe that they are. A man like a human hedgehog, with his body half covered with stilettos and knives, endeavours to sell these cheerful wares during the ten minutes allowed for refreshment at Alcazar, on the road to Seville. Of course the man is a Toledo blade, and of course his wares come from Toledo. If they are as harmless as the cutlery of the country, they may be trusted in the hands of children and idiots. As one approaches Seville, one sees Spain. National costume appears at the roadside stations, mixed with long-eared mules and aldermanic priests. In the distance, white-washed cities, like streaks of snow upon the hills, relieve the monotony of the sandy plains. Groves of olive-trees, long lines of prickly pears, the aloes, and the orange-trees represent the leading vegetation of the country, and the natives basking idly in the sun, represent the rest.

Arrived at Seville, you feel you are really in Spain, and severed as much as it is possible to be from Parisian influences. Seville is Spain in a nut-shell. It is more than this. It is an unique city. There is only one place in Europe that would make another Seville, and that is Venice. Venice drained, with its narrow canals turned into narrow alleys, would be a second Seville, but nothing would give it the cleanliness and fragrance of the Moorish-Spanish city. Seville is a city of marble, as London is a city of Stucco. The back-yard of the Englishman is the palace of the Sevillian. He retires from the sun on the lines laid down by his Moorish predecessors, and lives half the day in a marble court, like the Alhambra Court at the Crystal Palace. If little footway is dedicated to the public, that little is scrupulously clean and sweet. The houses almost kiss each other, and the blue sky above, when it is turned to fire in the summer, is shut out by awnings drawn from roof to roof. The scent of the orange-groves is in the air, and the promised garlic has to be sought after to be found.

III.

The government of Spain is a mixed Monarchy, consisting of the King and the Bull-Fighter. In Madrid, the King may have a little the best of the bargain; but in Seville the bull-fighter is decidedly triumphant. He holds his court in the narrow streets, in the *cafés*, and public places. In some of the shops the people bend the knee to him, if he is a leader of his tribe, and all his inferiors in the ring show him this mark of homage.

The Spaniards would be a charming people if they were only a little more musical. If some one would teach them to play the guitar or the castagnettes, as they are popularly supposed to play them, they would be less disappointing to the British traveller. Their national air, anthem, or march is a melancholy production. It is the tune the traditional cow died of, and no one can blame the cow. Their bulls (and horses) die to much more lively music, selected from the Casinos of Paris.

The economical arrangements of Seville are of what may be called a fatherly character. Food, as a rule, is sold in the public market, and nowhere else. It is sold at a very early hour, and at no other time. The prices are fixed by the Town Council from day

to day. The prices are not moderate. The poor and proud Hidalgo must have a bad time of it. No wonder the proverb says his breakfast-table consists of very little meat and a great deal of table-cloth.

The shops in the narrow streets and alleys are chiefly devoted to the sale of fancy articles—mostly French and English. The mantillas appear to come from the neighbourhood of Tottenham Court Road, and to be made of lace that is intended for window-curtains. The barbers are as numerous as gin-shops in England. They are not Figaros in liveliness, but they know how to shave. The clubs are shops, with very little to distinguish them from the public *cafés*. The amusements of Seville (always excepting bull-fights) are, like most amusements of the foreigner, rather melancholy. Spanish dancing appears to be a fading art, and gipsy-singing is worse than the howling at an Irish wake. Lopez de Vega wrote four thousand plays, but they seldom represent them. Mosquitos sting you in the houses, and beggars pester you in the streets. Spain can compete with Russia in the public exhibition of curious and wretched cripples.

Having written this much with a quill evidently drawn from the fretful porcupine, let us do justice to the brighter side of Seville. You mix with a people sober, polite, and orderly. You are in a city of

flowers. There is no smoke in the air, for there is is not a fire-place or a chimney-pot in Seville. Gardens run along the house-tops, and orange-trees grow in the few little public squares. Dark-eyed Rosinas peep at you like caged birds from windows barred with ironwork as delicate as a spider's web. On every side—in every nook and corner—are traces of the Moorish past. You turn aside and find yourself in a garden of palms that is older than Columbus, or the continent he discovered. You can sit by the side of a cool fountain and dream a dream of the "Arabian Nights." You see the church of the infidel built in many styles in the mosque of the faithful. From the mosque to the cathedral is one step; from the cathedral to the bull-ring is another.

IV.

Every nation has its favourite form of cruelty to animals. The English have their pigeon-matches; the Spaniards have their bull-fights. One or two weak-minded rulers of Spain have endeavoured to remove this disgrace from their country, but of course they have failed. They might as well try to upset Jeremy Diddlerism in their Finance as to depose King Toreador—the elect of the people!

No Spanish city is complete without its bull-ring. Writers who have had the inestimable advantages of a classical education, tell us that the bull-ring is the great-grandson of the Roman Arena, and that while the parents of civilisation gloated over the sufferings of dying gladiators, their Castilian descendants are content with the agonies of butchered horses and bulls. The horses that are tortured may be the most wretched "screws," but, for all that, they represent the sacred mystery of life.

The bull-ring is a gigantic circus, capable, in cities like Madrid and Seville, of seating fifteen thousand people. On Sundays and holidays, in the bull-fighting season, it is crowded with a representative audience of amateur butchers. The scum of the population is there in all the majesty of numbers, while rank and fashion are headed by Royalty or a Mayor. The entertainment might be thus described in the bills which plaster every wall of the city:

THE DANCING BUTCHERS;

OR,

THE RIGHT BEEF IN THE WRONG PLACE.

Flags are flying, a brass band is bleating, men are selling oranges, and nothing but drink is wanting to remind the home-sick Englishman of his native land. The Show begins with a procession of Toreadors,

gaily, even richly, dressed, who look like glorified Figaros about to give the spectators a Spanish ballet. They are really preparing for a dance—sometimes the dance of death. The ring is cleared, the door of the bull's den swings slowly open, and the first bull gallops into the ring. Three or four clumsy picadors, with padded legs, mounted on horses and armed with heavy spears, and the gaily-dressed Figaros, provided with gaudy handkerchiefs, are spread round the ring to receive him. The horses are mostly gray, because that colour shows off the blood. The bull "goes" at a picador, and, holding his head low, overturns both horse and man. The dancing butchers then skip round the bull, and distract his attention by flourishing the gaudy handkerchiefs. The bull, being a born fool, allows his attention to be drawn off the clumsy picador, who is lifted on his legs. The horse, if not ripped to death, is prodded into an upright position; and if he is spurred round the circle with his red protruding bowels dragging under him in the dust, the delight of the swinish multitude knows no bounds. When all the picadors have been dismounted, and nearly all their wretched animals gored to death, while the bull is bleeding from a score of spear-thrusts received from the picadors, who have tried to keep him at bay, the gaudy handkerchiefs are allowed to descend on the First Act of the drama.

The Second Act begins with a playful game, in which the Toreadors, or Dancing Butchers, give up the name of Chulos, or throwers of handkerchiefs, and become Banderilleros. The Banderilleros are furnished wirh short spears, like thick arrows or darts, decorated with bunches of recruiting sergeants' ribbons. These darts are stuck, one after the other, in the back of the bull, and here the misplaced courage, activity, and skill of the Toreadors are shown. When all the gaudy darts have been fixed, and the bull is sufficiently enraged, and partially exhausted, the Second Act of the Farcial-Tragedy closes.

In the third, and last Act, the Toreador becomes an Espada, and enters the ring alone, with a coloured cloak and a sword. He informs the King, or Mayor, or whoever may be the Chairman of the meeting, that he will kill the bull, but sometimes, though not often, the bull kills the Espada. The fight—like the whole of the proceedings—is carried on according to the strictest rules, drawn up and sanctioned by the wisdom of ages. The bull is kept at bay by the cloak, until the fitting moment arrives, when the variegated Butcher, rising on tiptoe, plunges his sword up to the hilt in the back of the baited animal, amidst the frantic applause of the multitude of Butcher-Worshippers. The band strikes up a Mabille tune

of the latest Parisian brand; the gory remains of the wretched animals—the bull and horses—

Butchered to make a Spanish holiday,

are dragged out of the circus by mules half-covered with bells; the attendants rake the sand over the trail of blood, and the ring is prepared for five more Farcial-Tragedies of a precisely similar pattern.

Beef should not be killed any more than dirty linen should be washed in public. Bull-fighting will not be put down, until bulls are taught to go at one thing at a time. When this result is arrived at, and bulls are able to kill Toreadors as easily as Toreadors now destroy bulls, bull-fighting will become as much a thing of the past as the pleasant game of quarter-staff.

THE END.

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